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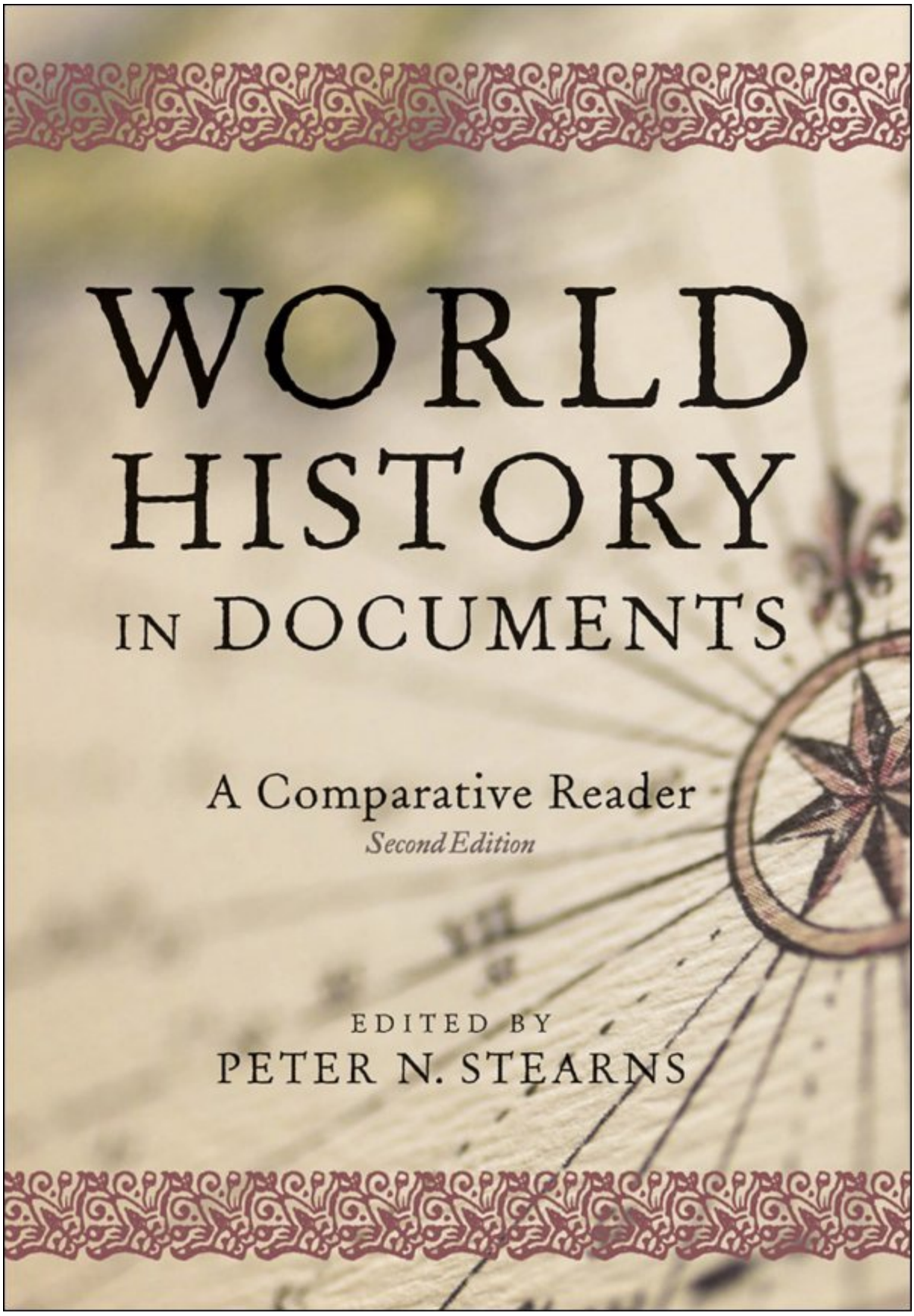
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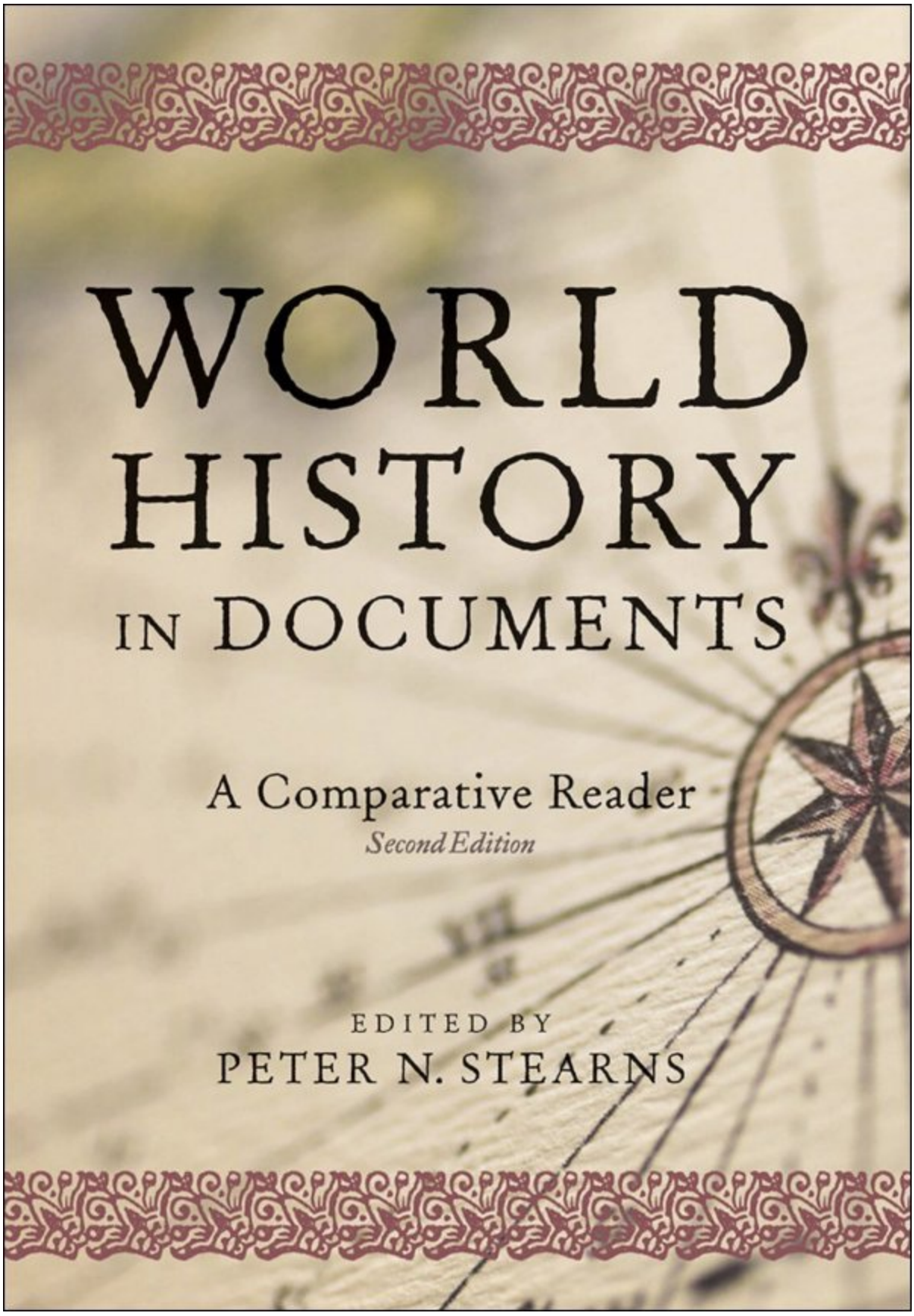
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NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS
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NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS

New York and London

www.nyupress.org

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-
Publication Data World history in documents : a
comparative reader / edited by Peter N. Stearns. — 2nd. ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-8147-4047-7 (cloth : alk. paper) ISBN-10: 0-
8147-4047-2 (cloth : alk. paper) ISBN-13: 978-0-8147-4048-
4 (pbk. : alk. paper) ISBN-10: 0-8147-4048-
0 (pbk. : alk. paper) 1. World history—
Sources. I. Stearns, Peter N.

D5.W67 2007

909—dc22 2007025223

New York University Press books are printed on acid-free paper and their binding materials are chosen for strength and durability.

Manufactured in the United States of America c 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

p 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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About the Editor

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Assistance from Steven Beaudoin and Carl Zimring, both ex perienced world history
teachers, was invaluable. Clio Stearns provided additional se rvice for the new
edition. Karen Cal as and Alicia Smal brock assured vital cler ical support. Several
col eagues, including Andrew Barnes, Erick Langer, Michael Adas, Donald Sutton and
Abraham Marcus, provided very useful suggestions. I wish to thank also what is now
several generations of world history students at George Mas on University, whose
interest and good ideas continue to motivate and educate m e.

INTRODUCTION

Comparative World History

This book advances an understanding of world history and d evelops two of the
essential skil s the study of world history should promote: th e ability to deal with
primary sources and the ability to compare important aspec ts of major societies.

Primary sources—
documents and other materials prepared at various times a

nd places in the world’s history—
offer a distinctive means of understanding the nature
of the past. They invite readers to put themselves in other p eople’s shoes—to
consider patterns of thinking and behavior different from our own. They also teach
skil s in assessment, interpretation, and the construction of arguments from data that
can be applied to contemporary materials as wel . Figuring o ut the meaning of
diverse materials indeed connects history directly to contem porary analysis.

Comparison is also vital. World historians are eager to discu ss contact among
major societies and the operation of global forces such as tr ade or migration. But
they also must provide the means of improving our understa nding of these partial y
separate patterns, as wel as diverse reactions to common f orces. Comparison forces
decisions about what is real y distinctive about a society an d what is shared—

perhaps beneath the surface of superficial differences.

Unlike textbooks, this col ection does not seek ful y compreh ensive coverage. It
deals with various aspects of the human experience, from g overnment to gender
systems, but it does not treat each aspect of every major so ciety. The book does
work to establish a sense of change over time, along with do cument assessment and
comparison. Materials are organized according to key period s in world history so

that readers can use sources and comparisons to discuss ch anging world frameworks.

Major societies initial y operated in considerable isolation, a nd this pattern requires comparison around similar functions but separate origins. Tr aces of this separateness persist to this day. The reasons why twentieth-century China embraced Communism but the Middle East did not go back, in part, to distinctions i n cultures and political systems established 1,500–2,500 years ago, when these regions formed their own identities. With the passage of time—and particularly from about 500 C.E.* onward—

major societies accelerated mutual contacts and exchanges. By the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries contacts intensified stil further. Even in the twentieth century, however, reactions to global contacts varied in the major civ ilizations, making comparison a vital analytical method in ongoing world histor y.

Primary Sources

The first emphasis is on primary sources, that is, documents written for the time and not intended, like a textbook, to explicitly inform current col ege students of world history. These primary sources, drawn from religious treatise s, government pronouncements, economic regulations, and the like, require careful interpretation in order to figure out their historical significance. The source s must be not only

read; they must also be assessed and recombined so that th
ey can be used to answer
historical questions that go beyond merely repeating what t
he document said. Thus,
a religious passage intended to define morality might be use
d to ask questions about gender—
basic views concerning men and women—
that the author was not ful y

gender—basic views concerning men and women—
that the author was not ful y
aware of. Or a company record listing the daily obligations o
f factory workers might
be expected to reveal fundamental assumptions about the n
ature of work. Through
sources of this sort, the volume deals with various facets of
modern civilizations in
Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas, ranging from the gro
wth of governments and
the impact of new science to the formation of novel work sy
stems and the
development of intense loyalties such as nationalism.

Reading a primary source requires some creative imaginatio
n because the
thinking behind it wil almost never be just like your own. W
ords that appear to be
the same as ours may have different meanings. It’s useful to
 ask of each source,
What are the key assumptions here, and which ones require
the biggest stretch from
current habits of thought? Different kinds of sources involve
different interpretive
tasks. Some are accounts of events; they need to be assess
ed for possible bias. Others
are documents in action, such as a declaration of war or a tr

eaty. These can be
evaluated for assumptions, but a bias test is less relevant. I n every case there is some
subtlety of meaning to be discovered, with the aid of the co ntexts provided in the
introductory notes to each chapter. The results can reach m ore deeply into the
notions of past societies than any other type of reading.

*The designation C.E. means “of the common era”; B.C.E me ans “before the common
era.” B.C.E. technical y starts from the beginning of time an d moves to the
conventional date for the birth of Christ. Many world historia ns prefer this term to
the Christian B.C. (“before Christ”), but it covers the same ti me period, as do C.E. and
the Christian A.D. (anno domini or “in the year of the Lord”). The first century B.C.E.

(100–1 B.C.E.) comes right before the first century C.E. (1– 100); there was no year zero.

Grouping the materials in comparative settings actual y help s focus the task of
analyzing their meaning. Documents can be read to determi ne what two or more
societies had in common, in an area such as religion or slav eholding, and what
differentiated them. They also reveal how differently major s ocieties can operate
and stil be “successful.” The documents themselves do not do the task of comparing,
for with rare exceptions they were not written with another s ociety in the mind. But
comparison can guide the task of deriving meaning. Docum

ents on Mexican and
Russian revolution, for example, invite interpretations that w il produce a sense of
what some of the central features of modern revolution wer e—and also a sense of
how the two movements differed around the common dyna mic.

World History and Civilizations

Studying world history involves examining the evolution of major individual
societies or civilizations. Major civilizations include those suc h as China or Western
Europe that generated certain shared cultural values and po litical forms and that
were usual y organized around strong internal trading netwo rks. Each civilization, in
other words, established some coherence that gave its mem bers a certain sense of identity—
an ability to determine that other societies were different, th at members of other civilizations were “outsiders”—
and that created more intense internal than
external contacts, for example, in commercial exchanges. A major civilization did
not necessarily have a single government—
it might be composed of many separate
kingdoms or nations—
but its regions or nations, even when rivalrous, nevertheless shared certain values. Thus, Western Europe has almost alw ays been political y
divided, often convulsed in internal wars, yet it has gained s ome common features
through its participation in Christianity and more modern sh ared cultures like

through its participation in Christianity and more modern sh
ared cultures like science and mutual trade.

The evolution of major societies is not the only subject of wo
rld history.

Important international developments, such as sweeping co
ntagious diseases,
migrations, missionary religions, and world trade, affect indi
vidual societies
powerful y, and these developments demand careful attenti
on in their own right. Yet
international factors are usual y handled through the institut
ions and beliefs of the
individual civilizations. An epidemic disease thus may be int
erpreted quite
differently by two separate societies, even though objectivel
y it is the same disease,
with approximately the same physical consequences. Intern
ational trade
opportunities may affect al societies, but some, because of
prior culture, wil
attempt to limit the impact of such trade while others wil e
mbrace the opportunity
to gain new contacts. Global factors, in other words, need to
 be understood as they
filtered through partial y separate civilizations—
even when they reduced the
distinctiveness and isolation of those civilizations.

The list of major civilizations in world history, defined in ter
ms of what a
civilization is (a form of human organization having economi
c surplus, formal
government, and so on) and in terms of special size and imp
ortance, contains some

standard entries. China, India, and the Muslim Middle East/North Africa are on any
list. So is Western Europe. Many centers of civilization formed in Africa south of the
Sahara, a vast territory; they had some features in common, and so references to sub-
Saharan African civilization are standard in world history, even though the
category embraces a great deal of diversity. The Asian, European, and African
civilizations were established well before 1450, but their separate trajectories
continued to exercise a powerful influence on world history thereafter. Latin
American civilization, emerging from the mixture of Spanish/Portuguese, American
Indian, and African elements, created a distinct identity, building in part on earlier
American Indian civilizations such as the Mayans, the Aztecs, and the Incas. The
basic list of major civilizations, by the sixteenth century, thus includes at least six
entries, most of them already quite old, with one, Latin America, just taking shape.

Inevitably issues of definition emerge. Same regions reflect influence from large
civilizations but retain distinctive features of their own: should Japan or Korea be
seen as separate societies, or as part of a larger East Asian civilization strongly
touched by China? Are the United States or Australia new civilizations or part of a
larger Western complex? Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia also raise key

definitional questions, as they blend their own experiences with outside influence.

Final y, key areas were not embraced by a single civilization at al , at least until
modern times. The vast nomadic territories of central Asia fo rm a particularly
important case in point. Comparison helps shape our unders tanding of many key issues in defining societies and regions.

Comparing Societies

Comparison is a standard form of human thought. We often try to understand
individual entities better by comparing them with something else we know. To take
a very simple example, person X gains identity and recogniz ability when we see that
she is tal er than person Y. The same gains accrue from com paring societies. The
United States, to take another fairly simple example, is ofte n cal ed a violent society.

By itself, that statement is hard to assess. It acquires meani ng only if we compare rates of violence—
murders per capita, for example—
with those of other societies.

And in fact, compared to Western Europe, the United States is a violent society. But

And in fact, compared to Western Europe, the United States is a violent society. But

—
and here comparison obviously becomes more complex, for it entails questions

about what comparisons are most revealing and relevant—compared with Latin America the United States is fairly violent but not extremely so.

Virtual y every characteristic we use to identify societies ass umes some comparative standard. China is usual y portrayed in world hi story as having a relatively centralized government and a tendency to scorn o utside cultures. These features can be traced by charting the evolution of Chinese history al by itself, but they gain real meaning only if we compare Chinese politics and cultural receptivity to another case, such as that of India (which comparison rev eals that the characterizations are accurate on the whole).

Without comparison, world history risks becoming a list of d evelopments in one place, fol owed by a list of developments in another, and on and on without much meaning. Comparison, actively juxtaposing major civilization s, helps us know what particularly to look for and appreciate about each case. It al so sets up other analytical tasks. Causation is one: if China is more centralize d political y than India, in most periods of world history, including today, then why—what other factors in the two societies help explain the initial difference and then explain why it was perpetuated? Impact is the second: what difference does it make, in family life or beliefs, for example, that China is usual y more centralized p olitical y than India?

(One twentieth-
century answer is birthrate: because China has frequently u sed
government to regulate society in the past, its policies towar d birthrate limitations
have been far more rigorous and successful than those of In dia.) Comparing major
civilizations stands at the core of making sense of world hist ory, by relating the
identities of the civilizations and clarifying questions of caus ation and impact.

Comparison even helps chart the real results of that other pr incipal strand of
world history: international crosscutting. Why does one civili zation respond
differently to the arrival of religious missionaries, or a new military technology, or a
major epidemic, than does another? In modern history, com paring differences
between African and Indian reactions to Western influences i s an obvious way to
deal with one of the major international forces of modern ti mes, as soon as we
realize that although Western influence has some common c omponents, its actual
impact varies considerably from case to case across the wor ld.

Comparison generates better understanding. But it is not al ways an easy analytical
assignment. Using the readings in each section of this book requires some vital
analytical habits, and questions in each chapter wil apply th ese habits to the
materials presented. The comparer faces several key issues:

1. Comparison must be active. There is sometimes an impul se to describe one
society, and then describe another, and assume that the co mparison has been made.

Not so. Comparison requires that the two cases be brought t ogether, so that the
comparer makes direct statements about how Muslim family structure, for example,
compares to Christian. If a facet of one society is discussed, it must be discussed for
the other as wel , for otherwise comparison is impossible. Co mparison may require
some separate descriptions of each case by way of backgro und, but ultimately, at the
heart of the presentation, direct juxtaposition is essential. In comparing
documentary sources of the sort presented in this book, this means that it is not
enough simply to summarize one document and then anoth er; they must be explicitly brought together.

2. Comparison must al ow for similarities as wel as differenc es. This is obvious, but
sometimes it is tempting to stress differences above al . Maj or civilizations often had

sometimes it is tempting to stress differences above al . Maj or civilizations often had
a lot in common, in part because they experienced similar gl obal influences. The
trick in comparison is to figure out what the balance betwee n similarity and difference is, and not to overdraw contrasts.

3. Comparison involves a sensible choice of cases. Comparin g the importance of

palm trees in Jamaica and in northern Ontario is possible but sil y—the contexts are too different to provide any useful meaning. Comparing Rus sian and American concerns about dieting in the mid-twentieth century is also sil y, beyond an initial finding that Russians, worried mainly about finding enough f ood, did not develop a systematic diet culture during the decades in which America ns worried about the subject incessantly. The most revealing comparisons involve societies that have enough in common that exploring differences real y gets to t he heart of some major distinctions between the two cases.

In the chapters of this book, that test has been imposed: tot al disparities are not presented, because they are not very informative. This is on e reason why, societies are compared in the same time period. Comparing industrial Japan with early Mesopotamian civilizations would quickly reveal huge differe nces, starting with technology, but it would not be as useful as comparing Meso potamia with its early civilization neighbor Egypt, or the Japanese version of indust rial society with that of Germany. Even with relatively precise comparative choices, there is always room for debate. In the violence example presented above, which co mparison is more useful if the goal is to understand the United States? Europe is Ameri cans' standard historical reference, because a (shrinking) majority of Americans are o f European origin and because many Americans think of Europe as the measure of al things civilized. But

perhaps choosing Latin America, another society with a strong and recent frontier tradition, is actually more revealing. Here, selection of the cases is complex and invites open discussion. It will be well to keep in mind, while studying the chapters of this book, what other comparative sets might have been useful in dealing with the phenomenon in question.

4. Comparison involves a decision about how many cases to compare. Comparing two cases, Christianity and Islam, is easier than adding a third, Buddhism.

Sometimes a three-way comparison may be helpful, for example, in showing that two cases, which look rather different when compared with each other, actually have some striking similarities when an even more distinctive case is brought into the picture. Christianity and Islam, for example, are quite similar religions (and for good historical reason), compared with Buddhism, even though Christians and Muslims often like to emphasize their mutual differences and dislikes. (Disliking another society is not proof of difference; often the societies that are most similar particularly dislike each other because they need to establish separate identities.)

5. Comparison involves flexibility and imagination. In comparing, be alert for revealing, if unfamiliar, subjects, and don't be surprised when comparisons don't produce the results that a preliminary comparative sense mi

ght lead one to
anticipate. Take an unexpected comparative finding as a cha l enge to explore
further. Compared to al other societies in the world today, t he United States has
more people in jail per capita. How and why has the nation g enerated this
distinctive feature? The answer, even though the category is not a very standard
component of our assessment of American history, could be very revealing. Another
comparative topic: France has a rich history of fascination wi th fancy cooking and foods. Butter-
based cooking entered French dining as early as the sevente enth
century. The United States historical y has been much more conscious of nutritional
aspects of food (reformers were discussing this as early as t he 1830s, hence new

aspects of food (reformers were discussing this as early as t he 1830s, hence new
products like the graham cracker and Kel ogg’s cereals). So which society produces
the lower percentage of overweight people? The answer: Fra nce, hands down. The
average French person has lost an average of about two pou nds between 1940 and
1990 while the average American has gained eight, height h eld constant. This is on
the surface an unexpected comparative finding, which shoul d then dictate a search
for the reasons, given a comparative food history that perha ps ought to have produced the opposite results.

Using Documents and Comparisons in Teaching and Learning World History

Many world history courses already use documents and comparisons, which was one reason the first edition of this book proved useful. The standards of the new Advanced Placement program in world history, which emphasize both primary source analysis and comparison, also testify to the importance of the skills this collection promotes.

It is also true, however, that introducing comparative analysis of sources into some world history programs remains challenging. The topics in this collection are designed to fit, and enhance, much standard coverage. Each chapter is introduced in ways that help connect the material to fundamental themes in the world history course—to discussions of the nature of government in the classical period, for example, or of the evolution of labor systems in Latin America. Emphasis on the major societies of Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas, and organization in terms of the standard world history time periods, additionally facilitates integration with other reading and classroom work. Materials in the final section, on the contemporary period in world history, invite assessment in terms of earlier patterns and traditions, where world history past actively conditions world history present.

Using the Book

Each section of this book opens with an introduction to the main characteristics of the time period in world history. The introductions explain how the ensuing chapter topics relate to basic patterns and why the comparative selections make sense in terms of the activities emphasized—trade, or religion, or gender—and in terms of the specific civilizations included.

Each chapter also has an introduction, identifying the comparative topic and the societies involved and placing both in world history context. This introduction also explains how the civilizations selected are significant for the topic—why classical China and Greece, for example, should be compared politically, or why Indian religions should be compared with religions that arose in the Middle East.

After the introduction to each chapter, a set of questions raises some of the specific comparative issues that can be found in the documents that follow. A final set of questions, “For Further Discussion,” presents wider comparative issues that can be handled partially from the documents but that need further comparative information—from textbooks or other historical studies or, sometimes, from other chapters in this book.

Questions in the first segment, before “For Further Discussion,” can be answered from the documents. Looking at the questions first can help guide the reading of the documents, and then the questions should be reexamined a

fter the documents have
been read. The questions apply to a particular topic—
the conditions of women in
Africa and Latin America, for example, using the comparativ
e approaches discussed

Africa and Latin America, for example, using the comparativ
e approaches discussed
above. They thus ask about similarities as wel as difference
s and about causes and
impacts of comparative features (cal ing for imaginative ext
ensions). And they
promote direct comparison rather than a mere sequencing o
f data from one civilization to the next.

Final y, each document or document set has a brief heading
that gives details
about the time, the place, and the authorship of the docume
nt or documents. The
context supplied by this information should be included in a
ssessing the document’s
meanings and in preparing for the comparisons.

PART I

River Val ey Civilizations, 3500–
1000 B.C.E., and the Classical Period, 1000 B.C.E.–450 C.E.

THE EARLY RIVER VALLEY civilizations formed in the Middle E
ast, North Africa, India, and
China. (Later, the expansive classical civilizations developed
 both in these regions
and beyond.) Early civilizations and their classical successor
s set up important
cultural and institutional characteristics that had enduring in
fluence, providing vital topics for comparative analysis.

Early Cultures and the Early Civilization Period

The early civilization period began around 3500 B.C.E. in the Tigris-Euphrates val ey in the northern Middle East. Early civilization periods in othe r regions, also for the most part based in river val eys exploited for irrigation as w el as transportation, had somewhat different dates. Egypt developed from about 3000 B.C.E. onward, China from 1500, and the first civilizations in Central America (the Olmecs) from about 800 B.C.E. No civilization could emerge without the prior de velopment of agriculture.

For historians studying early cultures and civilizations, a key problem is the lack of abundant sources. Many important cultures, with wel - defined belief systems and elaborate rules for behavior, never generated writing. Furth ermore, much writing has been destroyed over time, and writing on stone tablets or bones was so laborious that it was not very widespread in any event.

The first chapter, as a result, deals with only a few topics, b ut those are fundamental to early societies. The writings of early civilizati ons must be asked questions that they were not explicitly designed to answer. L aw codes, for example, provide our only real evidence about family patterns and so cial structures, even though these topics were not formal y laid out. Only after th e nature of the evidence is assessed can comparison among belief systems or civiliza tion forms be attempted.

The Classical Period, 1000 B.C.E.–450 C.E.

Between 1000 and 500 B.C.E., several civilization centers began to transcend the patterns of river valley societies. Using iron tools and weapons, governments conquered new territories and economies generated new opportunities for regional trade and specialization. The twin themes in this period were civilization expansion, from river valley origins to much larger regions, and territorial integration. As societies grew geographically, they had to find ways to form a region into a coherent trade area; into a roughly common cultural zone where elites, at least, would share some basic ideas and art forms; and—at times—into a single political unit. Major classical civilizations arose in India, China, and the Mediterranean, with a fourth center in Persia. All of these regions created political empires that sought considerable political unity as part of the integration—though the durability of the empires varied considerably. Everywhere, a series of new invasions, occurring between the third and the sixth centuries C.E., introduced disruptions that ended the classical period.

With the classical period opportunities for comparison among the civilizations increase. Developments in this period—the emergence of Confucianism in China and the religious emphases of classical India, for example—set an enduring framework for the areas involved, which makes comparison all the more significant. Some of

for the areas involved, which makes comparison al the mor e significant. Some of
the differences between India and China today go back to co ntrasts that first became apparent in the classical centuries.

The major classical civilizations built on the precedents of th e river val ey centers,
but their territories were larger and their cultural systems w ere more formal. They
used some earlier ideas, including those of the polytheistic r eligions, but they shaped
more systematic statements. Thus, in India a priestly, polyth eistic religion evolved
into Hinduism. China produced Confucianism as a unifying c ultural approach, at
least for much of the upper class. Political institutions expan ded. Al the major
centers formed huge empires, at least during key portions of the classical period. In
China the imperial form became the standard political frame work. Commercial
exchange increased. Social structures perpetuated inequaliti es that had undoubtedly
started earlier but were now more formalized, more ful y int egrated with beliefs and
political practices. Thus, India developed its caste system, a nd the Mediterranean
region relied considerably on slavery. The same formalizatio n applies to gender
relations, where the assumptions of patriarchy were spel ed out more ful y.

In politics, in diverse cultural expressions, and in social form s, the classical
civilizations shared important characteristics. They were al rooted in agricultural

economies in which trade was expanding. They al faced the task of integrating larger territories into a common civilization orbit, and this re quired innovation in political institutions and ideas and in cultural forms. The clas sical civilizations even had some mutual contacts—more, on the whole, than the more isolated river val ey civilizations had maintained. Greek and Indian civilizations e ncountered each other in the fourth century B.C.E. through the conquests of Alexan der the Great; the result was some mutual imitation of ethical ideas, artistic forms, a nd mathematics. Later in the classical period, Chinese trade with India brought knowl edge of Buddhism, and Chinese pilgrims journeyed to India to learn more. Trade rou tes took Chinese silk as far west as the Roman Empire.

On the whole, however, the key developments of the classic al period took place separately, with each civilization putting a distinctive stamp on its social, political, and cultural forms. Rome received Chinese silk, but it knew almost nothing about China, and the converse was true as wel . Separateness was compounded by a heightened sense of identity. As the Greeks or the Chinese d eveloped their societies, they became proudly aware of how different (and, usual y, i nferior) other peoples were. Separate historical patterns and a concern for identity add up to an obvious comparative chal enge. As in the early civilization period, co mparison most obviously focuses on how key civilizations differed, even as t hey addressed common

themes such as the presumed inferiority of women. Explaining why the differences arose and what impact they had extends this comparative analysis. Comparison highlights the distinctive traditions and identities that were taking shape in the classical period and that would echo later on. But comparison can also tease out some of the common features, even when the leaders of the principal civilizations were unaware of them.

CHAPTER 1

CREATION STORIES

Many societies—probably the vast majority—generate explanations of how the world began, or at least how humans began. Such explanations are often part of a larger religious outlook.

Comparing creation stories raises key issues about beneath-the-surface similarities, including, of course, why so many otherwise distinctive societies felt a similar need to account for origins.

The variations among the stories are significant too, suggesting different specific religious beliefs and different ideas about the relationship between humans and other aspects of nature.

The following stories come from the Americas, from Africa, and from the Middle East. Three—Babylonian, Egyptian, and Mayan—derive from early civilizations. Two are from hunting and gathering groups, recently recorded though of much older origin. In addition to one-to-one comparisons, the collection may suggest different

kinds of groupings that wil assist further comparative analy
sis.

Questions

1. What are the most important differences among the stori
es? Are the differences significant or superficial?

2. What do the stories have in common? Is it possible to ide
ntify similar elements in
the origins beliefs of early human societies?

3. Do the stories group together in meaningful ways? Do the
 stories from early
civilizations share elements that differentiate them from the
 hunting and gathering
stories? Are there common elements in terms of geography?

For Further Discussion

1. What might have caused significant differences among th
e stories?

2. How do the stories compare to those of major religions, li
ke Christianity and
Islam? Are they very different, and if so why?

3. In addition to comparing features and causes, is it historic
al y useful to evaluate
comparatively? Are some of the stories better or more satisf
ying than others? On what basis can you judge?

4. Is it possible to infer significant characteristics of a societ
y from a creation story?

Does a story suggest distinctive religious beliefs or attitudes
 toward nature?

A Kabyl Story

This story comes from the Kabyl peoples of the Sahara; a nomadic group, they live in what is now Morocco and Algeria. It is not known when this oral legend first developed, or what other influences it reflected (the Kabyl are now Muslims).

• • •

In the beginning there were only one man and one woman and they lived not on the earth but beneath it. They were the first people in the world and neither knew that the other was of another sex. One day they both came to the wel to drink. The man

the other was of another sex. One day they both came to the wel to drink. The man said: “Let me drink.” The woman said: “No, I’l drink first. I was here first.” The man tried to push the woman aside. She struck him. They fought. The man smote the woman so that she dropped to the ground. Her clothing fel to one side. Her thighs were naked.

The man saw the woman lying strange and naked before him. He saw that she had a vagina. He felt that he had a penis. He looked at the vagina and asked: “What is that for?” The woman said: “That is good.” The man lay upon the woman. He lay with the woman eight days.

After nine months the woman bore four daughters. Again, after nine months, she bore four sons. And again four daughters and again four sons. So at last the man and

the woman had fifty daughters and fifty sons. The father an
d mother did not know
what to do with so many children. So they sent them away.

The fifty maidens went off together towards the north. The fi
fty young men went
off together towards the east. After the maidens had been o
n their way northwards
under the earth for a year, they saw a light above them. The
re was a hole in the
earth. The maidens saw the sky above them and cried: “Wh
y stay under the earth
when we can climb to the surface where we can see the sky
?” The maidens climbed
up through the hole and onto the earth.

The fifty youths likewise continued in their own direction un
der the earth for a
year until they, too, came to a place where there was a hole
 in the crust and they
could see the sky above them. The youths looked at the sky
and cried: “Why remain
under the earth when there is a place from which one can se
e the sky?” So they
climbed through their hole to the surface.

Thereafter the fifty maidens went their way over the earth’s
surface and the
youths went their way and none knew aught of the others.

At the time al trees and plants and stones could speak. The
fifty maidens saw the
plants and asked them: “Who made you?” And the plants re
plied: “The earth.” The
maidens asked the earth, “Who made you?” And the earth r
eplied, “I was already

here.” During the night the maidens saw the moon and the stars and they cried:

“Who made you that you stand so high over us and over the trees? Is it you who give
us light? Who are you, great and little stars? Who created yo u? Or are you, perhaps,
the ones who have made everything else?”…

A NORTH AMERICAN VERSION

THE HAIDA STORY1

The Haida are a Native American people in the Canadian No rthwest, along the
Pacific coast of what is now British Columbia.

• • •

Then one day the water began to fal , and at last even the t hin spit of sand now
known as Rose Spit lay dry. The Raven flew there and found it covered by clams,
cockles, rock oysters, crabs, scal ops, sea cucumbers, abalo ne, red turbans, sea
urchins, mussels in their dark blue mantle, and fish of al kin ds left behind by the
fal ing water. For a long time, he did nothing but eat, gorgin g himself on these delic
acies. But at last even his gluttony was satisfied and he beg an to think of the other
things he liked doing, playing tricks, changing things so the world would not settle down to a boring routine.

There certainly was not much to play with or change on this deserted beach, with
no companions except the rapidly expiring sea creatures left

stranded there. The
Raven walked along getting more bored and restless by the minute.

He had almost decided to fly away to some more interesting spot even if it meant
leaving al this lovely ripe food behind, but decided there m ust be something more
on this beach. So he continued his strol , cal ing out in frustr ation now and then.

“This is a fine place for food,” he said, and “I must say that t he big bright bal , the
Sun I stole from the old man and hung up there in the sky is a big improvement. But
there certainly is not much to do here.” He threw back his h ead and cal ed to the
empty sky in his loudest voice, “Isn’t there anybody anywhe re?” Almost immediately
he heard an answering cry which seemed to come from far beneath him. At first he
saw nothing, except a remarkably large clamshel half burie d in the sand.

“I have seen lot of clams in my time,” he said, “but the most noise they have been
able to make was a sort of squishy sound. So this is at least a different kind of
clam.” He leaned closer and saw that the shel was an old o ne and that its original
occupant had long since departed. It was now fil ed with a m ass of squirming
creatures al trying to hide from the enormous black shape t hat seemed intent on destroying them.

1 From Leo Frobenius and Douglas Fox, African Genesis (Ne
w York: Benjamin Blair, 1966), 49–50.

If the Raven had not eaten so much so recently, the little cre
atures might have
become part of his dinner, and the world would have been a
 much different place.

But his curiosity at the moment was much stronger than his
appetite. So instead of
picking up the shel and dropping it on a rock to break it ope
n, he very gently, using
his most charming and seductive voice, a lovely bel -
like croon, certainly one of the
most beautiful sounds in the world, which seems to come fr
om the roots of the
mountains, from the wel springs of the sea, from the caves
where the winds are
born, he coaxed the little creatures to come out of their shel
 . He told them of the
land that waited for them, covered the great red cedar trees
 from which they could
build their big houses and seagoing canoes, and in time tal
totem poles to
commemorate their great deeds. He sang of the restless sea
s, which every year would
bring the salmon to the rivers and are the home of the great
 whales, the porpoises,
the seals and sea lions, the sea otters and al the fish, which
 would feed them through their time on earth.

So with much hesitation, afraid but unable to resist, they fin
al y came out.

Very strange creatures they were: two legs like the Raven, b
ut no shiny feathers on

their bodies or wings. In fact no wings at al , just long thin a ppendages which
moved constantly. Except for their shiny black hair on their r ound heads, they were
naked, quite the strangest creatures the Raven had ever see n—these first people—

who were to become Haida.

For a long time the Raven amused himself with his new play things, teaching the
men and women al kinds of clever tricks: how to build the b eautiful Haida canoes
which took them on fishing and sea hunting trips, and, as th ey grew in numbers, to
visit and trade or go to war with their neighbors.

He watched the children grow up and have children of their own, and the old
people die. He watched some of them become chiefs and so me slaves, and he saw
the chiefs prove how great they were by building great hous es, beautiful y decorated
with carvings tel ing of their heraldic pasts, and fil ed with e xquisite ceremonial

with carvings tel ing of their heraldic pasts, and fil ed with e xquisite ceremonial
works of art to be used at the great winter feasts. He watch ed them dance and
listened to them sing, and enjoyed the stories they told, part icularly those about him.

It was a fine game he played with the little people from the clamshel , and it lasted for many centuries.

A BABYLONIAN STORY

This story comes from a tablet found in the ruins of the city of Ashur, dating back to
approximately 800 B.C.E. It was a version of an older Sumeri an story. It provided
names for the first humans, Ul igarra and Zalgarra, and impl ied that they were divine to some degree—
created from divine blood possibly mixed with clay.

• • •

Another Account of the Creation of Man2

A tablet discovered among the ruins of the city of Ashur and dating back to
approximately 800 B.C. gives us stil another version of the creation of man. This text
consists of three columns. The first contains signs which are held by some to be
musical notes but which are most likely symbols of some kin d of secret writing; the
second contains the Sumerian version of the story of man's creation; and the third
offers the Babylonian translation of it. On this tablet mentio n is made for the first time in Babylonian-
Assyrian literature of the first two human beings and their names, Ul igarra and Zalgarra. Before each one's name is pl aced the sign for "deity,"

which means that the first ancestors of mankind were regar ded as being divine at
least to some degree. The reason for this conception lies, of course, in the fact that
they were thought to have been created with divine blood, which, according to other sources, was mixed with clay.

Obverse

1. When heaven had been separated from the earth, the dis
tant trusty twin,
2. [And] the mother of the goddesses had been brought into
being;
3. When the earth had been brought forth [and] the earth h
ad been fashioned;
4. When the destinies of heaven and earth had been fixed;
5. [When] trench and canal had been given [their] right cour
ses,
6. [And] the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates had been
established, 7. [Then]

8. The great gods,

9. [And] the Anunnaki, the great gods,

10. Seated themselves in the exalted sanctuary

11. And recounted among themselves what had been create
d.

12. “Now that the destinies of heaven and earth have been f
ixed,
13. Trench and canal have been given their right courses,
14. The banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates

15. Have been established,

16. What [else] shal we do?

2 From Alexander Heidel, The Babylonian Genesis (2nd ed.,
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 69–
71. Reprinted with permission of the publisher.

17. What [else] shal we create?

18. O Anunnaki, ye great gods,

19. What [else] shal we do?

20. What [else] shal we create?

21. The great gods who were present,

22. The Anunnaki, who fix the destinies,

23. Both [groups] of them, made answer

24. “In Unumua [a saved city], the bond of heaven and eart
h, 25. Let us slay [two] Lamga gods.

26. With their blood let us create mankind.

27. The service of the gods be their portion,

28. For al times

29. To maintain the boundary ditch,

30. To place the hoe and the basket

31. Into their hands

32. For the dwel ing of the great gods,

33. Which is fit to be an exalted sanctuary,

34. To mark off field from field,

35. For al times

36. To maintain the boundary ditch,

37. To give the trench [its] right course,

38. To maintain the boundary stone [?],

39. To water the four regions of the earth [?],

40. To raise plants in abundance,...

Reverse

1. To make field of the Anunnaki [earth] produce plentiful y,
2. To increase the abundance in the land,

3. To celebrate the festivals of the gods,...

4. To pour out cold water

5. That they should increase ox, sheep, cattle, fish, and fowl,
6. The abundance in the land,

7. Enul [and] Ninul [god and goddess of abundance]

8. Decreed with their holy mouths.

9. Aruru, the lady of the gods, who is fit for rulership,
10. Ordained for them great destinies:

11. Skil ed worker to produce for skil ed worker [and] unskil ed worker for unskil ed

11. Skil ed worker to produce for skil ed worker [and] unskil ed worker for unskil ed worker,

12. [Springing up] by themselves like grain from the ground,
13. A thing which, [like] the stars of heaven, shal not be cha nged forever.

14. Day and night

15. To celebrate the festivals of the gods

16. The great gods, decree [for them].

17. In the place where mankind was created,

18. There Nisaba [goddess of grain and wisdom] was firmly established.

19. Let the wise teach the mystery to the wise.

AN EGYPTIAN STORY

The story was preserved in a document written around 310 B.C.E., but it undoubtedly refers to much older materials.

• • •

The Book of Knowing the Genesis of the Sun-God3

“The Master of Everything saith after his forming:

‘When I had formed, then [only] the forms were formed.

Al the forms were formed after my forming.

Numerous are the forms from that which proceeded from m y mouth.

The heaven had not been formed,

The earth had not been formed,

The ground had not been created

[For?] the reptiles in that place.

I raised [myself] among them in the abyss, out of [its] inertn ess.

When I did not find a place where I could stand,
I thought wisely [?] in my heart,

I founded in my soul [?].

I made al forms, I alone.

I had not yet ejected [other gods],

None else had arisen who had worked [?] with me.

[Then] I founded in my own heart;

3 From Louis Gray, ed., The Mythology of Al Races, vol. 12 (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1964), 68–69. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

There were formed many [forms?]

The forms of the forms in the forms of the children,
(And) in the forms of their children.

What I ejected was Shu,

What I spat out was Tefenet.

My father, the abyss, sent them.

My eye fol owed them through ages of ages [?]

As [they] separated from me. After I was formed as the only [god],
Three gods were [separated] from me [since?] I was on this earth.

Shu and Tefenet rejoiced in the abyss in which they were.

They brought me my eye [back] [fol owing] after them.

They brought me my eye [back] [fol owing] after them.

After I had united my members, I wept over them.

The origin of men was [thus] from my tears which came fro
m my eye.

It became angry against me after it had come [back],
When it found that I had made me another [eye] in its place

[And] I had replaced it by a resplendent eye;

I had advanced its place in my face afterward,

[So that] it ruled this whole land.

Now [?] at its [?] time were there [?] plants [?].

I replaced what she had taken therefrom.

I came forth from the plants [?].

I created al reptiles and al that was in [?] them.

Shu and Tefenet begat [Qeb] and Nut.

Qeb and Nut begat Osiris, Horus,

One of them after the other;

Their children are many on this earth.’”

THE MAYAN STORY, FROM POPOL VUH

Popol Vuh was a Council Book used as a source of advice for
 Mayan leaders in Quiche, a center in present-
day Guatemala, around 1000 C.E. (The only existing
document was written in the sixteenth century after the Spa
nish conquest.) The book
was used to guide decisions and interpret omens. The book i
ncluded a creation story

dealing with the origins of the planets, animals, even bal ga mes—as wel as humans.

• • •

The Mayan Story of Human Creation from Popol Vuh4

And here is the beginning of the conception of humans, and of the search for the
ingredients of the human body. So they spoke, the Bearer, B egetter, the Makers,
Modelers named Sovereign Plumed Serpent:

“The dawn has approached, preparations have been made, and morning has come
for the provider, nurturer, born in the light, begotten in the li ght. Morning has come
for humankind, for the people of the face of the earth,” they said. It al came
together as they went on thinking in the darkness in the nig ht, as they searched and
they sifted, they thought and they wondered.

And here their thoughts came out in clear light. They sought and discovered what
was needed for human flesh. It was only a short while befor e the sun, moon, and
stars were to appear above the Makers and Modelers. Broke n Place, Bitter Water
Place is the name: the yel ow corn, white corn came from th ere.

And these are the names of the animals who brought the fo od: fox, coyote, parrot,
crow. There were four animals who brought the news of the ears of yel ow corn and

white corn. They were coming from over there at Broken Pla ce, they showed the way to the break.

And this was when they found the staple foods.

And these were the ingredients for the flesh of the human w ork, the human
design, and the water was for the blood. It became human b lood, and corn was also used by the Bearer, Begetter.

And so they were happy over the provisions of the good mo untain, fil ed with
sweet things, thick with yel ow corn, white corn, and thick wi th pataxte and cacao,

sweet things, thick with yel ow corn, white corn, and thick wi th pataxte and cacao,
countless zapotes, anonas, jocotes, nances, matasanos, swe ets the rich foods fil ing
up the citadel named Broken Place, Bitter Water Place. Al th e edible fruits were
there: smal staples, great staples, smal plants, great plants . The way was shown by the animals.

And then the yel ow corn and white corn were ground, and X mucane did the
grinding nine times. Corn was used, along with the water sh e rinsed her hands with,
for the creation of grease; it became human fat when it was worked by the Bearer,
Begetter, Sovereign Plumed Serpent, as they are cal ed.

After that, they put it into words:

the making, the modeling of our first mother-father,
with yel ow corn, white corn along for the flesh,
food alone for the human legs and arms,

for our first fathers, the four human works.

It was staples alone that made up their flesh.

4 From Dennis Tedlock, Popol Vuh: The Mayan Book of the D
awn of Life (New York:
Simon and Schuster, 1996). Reprinted with the permission o
f Simon and Schuster
Adult Publishing Group. Copyright 1985, 1996 by Dennis Ted
lock.

• • •

These are the names of the first people who were made and
 modeled.

This is the first person: Jaguar Quitze.

And now the second: Jaguar Night.

And now the third: Mahucutah.

And the fourth: True Jaguar.

And these are the names of our first mother-
fathers. They were simply made and
modeled, it is said; they had no mother and no father. We ha
ve named the men by
themselves. No woman gave birth to them, nor were they b
egotten by the builder,
sculptor, Bearer, Begetter. By sacrifice alone, by genius alon
e they were made, they
were modeled by the Maker, Modeler, Bearer, Begetter, Sov
ereign Plumed Serpent.

And when they came to fruition, they came out human:
They talked and they made words.

They looked and they listened.

They walked, and worked.

They were good people, handsome, with looks of the male kind. Thoughts came into existence and they gazed; their vision came al at once. Perfectly they saw, perfectly they knew everything under the sky, whenever they looked. The moment they turned around and looked around in the sky, whenever they looked. The moment they turned around and looked around in the sky, on the earth, everything was seen without any obstruction. They didn't have to walk around before they could see what was under the sky; they just stayed where they were.

As they looked, their knowledge became intense. Their sight passed through trees, through rocks, through lakes, through seas, through mountains, through plains.

Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Mahucutah, and True Jaguar were truly gifted people.

And then they were asked by the builder and mason:

"What do you know about your being? Don't you look, don't you listen? Isn't your speech good, and your walk? So you must look, to see out under the sky. Don't you see the mountain-plain clearly? So try it," they were told.

And then they saw everything under the sky perfectly. After that, they thanked the Maker, Modeler:

“Truly now,

double thanks, triple thanks

that we’ve been formed, we’ve been given

our mouths, our faces,

we speak, we listen,

we wonder, we move,

our knowledge is good, we’ve understood

what is far and near,

and we’ve seen what is great and smal

under the sky, on the earth.

Thanks to you we’ve been formed,

we’ve come to be made and modeled,

our grandmother, our grandfather,”

they said when they gave thanks for having been made and modeled. They
understood everything perfectly, they sighted the four sides , the four corners in the
sky, on the earth, and this didn’t sound good to the builder a nd sculptor:

“What our works and designs have said is no good:

‘We have understood everything, great and smal ,’ they say. ” And so the Bearer, Begetter took back their knowledge:

“What should we do with them now? Their vision should at l east reach nearby,
they should see at least a smal part of the face of the earth , but what they’re saying
isn’t good. Aren’t they merely ‘works’ and ‘designs’ in their very names? Yet they’l
become as great as gods, unless they procreate, proliferate at the sowing, the dawning, unless they increase.”

“Let it be this way: now we’l take them apart just a little, th at’s what we need.

What we’ve found out isn’t good. Their deeds would become equal to ours, just
because their knowledge reaches so far. They see everythin g,” so said the Heart of Sky, Hurricane,

Newborn Thunderbolt, Raw Thunderbolt,

Sovereign Plumed Serpent,

Bearer, Begetter,

Xpiyacoc, Xmucane,

Maker, Modeler,

as they are cal ed. And when they changed the nature of the ir works, their designs, it
was enough that the eyes be marred by the Heart of Sky. Th ey were blinded as the
face of a mirror is breathed upon. Their eyes were weakened . Now it was only when
they looked nearby that things were clear.

And such was the loss of the means of understanding, along with the means of

knowing everything, by the four humans. The root was implanted.

As such was the making, modeling of our first grandfather, our father, by the Heart of Sky, Heart of Earth.

CHAPTER 2

COMPARING LAWS

The Importance of the State

Codes of law were a common product of relatively early civilizations. The following two selections reflect the development of written laws, associated with the operations of organized government. The first known code is that of the Babylonian emperor Hammurabi, issued around 1700 B.C.E. Jewish law, ultimately written as part of the Bible, particularly in the book of Deuteronomy, developed later, beginning about 950 B.C.E.

Law codes do much more than simply define crimes and punishments. They reveal beliefs about religion, the family and the nature of the state. Comparing codes can indicate deep-seated contrasts and commonalities between societies, though they must be interpreted beyond literal meanings. Comparison is a vital means of getting at some of the key characteristics of early civilizations.

Law codes in early civilizations shared many features—indeed, in defining crimes such as murder, they share features with modern codes as well. Codes worked

toward replacing private feuds and violence with governmen
t-sponsored justice, for example—
though early states often failed to enforce such edicts. Meso
potamian law
surely influenced Jewish codes, for the Jewish state was ofte
n under Mesopotamian
control. A surprising array of laws dealing with gender and r
egulating sexual
behavior, particularly for women, characterized both system
s, though in Judaism the
rules were slightly harsher and the concern for limited prote
ctive rights slightly less
wel developed. Law in both societies reflected the smal bur
eaucracies of the early states—
hence a concern for punishing false testimony, in the absen
ce of extensive
investigatory police forces, and an emphasis on harsh punis
hments designed to deter
crime. Provisions in both societies also expressed some inter
est in protecting general
social welfare, for example, in trying to assure wages for wo
rk or (in the
Mesopotamian case) reimbursing for loss in crime—
a notion stil being debated in the United States.

The two codes displayed crucial differences as wel , reflectin
g different religious
cultures and political institutions. Mesopotamian law stresse
d the power of the state,
though sanctioned by gods such the creator Marduk and a p
olytheistic religion. In
contrast, Jewish law was seen as emanating from Jehovah, i
n the world’s first real
monotheistic religion. Did this difference in framework show
up in the laws
themselves and in efforts to assure obedience?

Questions

1. How did Babylonian law try to reconcile the needs of the s
tate with the fact that
it could not afford a large, professional bureaucracy? How di
d the state use

“volunteers”? How did it arrange for public works?

2. What protections did women have in Babylonian law? Ho
w do these compare
with the stipulations for women in Jewish law? How can we t
el that both societies were patriarchal?

3. How many social classes did Babylonia have? Was Jewish
law different in its approach to the poorer classes?

4. What were the key differences between Babylonian and Je
wish religions?

5. What are the sources claimed for the law in the two societ
ies? How did the
differences in these claims relate to differences in the roles
of priests and government officials?

6. What are the main similarities between the two law codes
?

For Further Discussion

1. How did both law codes differ from modern ideas of law?

2. What might have caused the key differences between Jew
ish and Babylonian law?

MESOPOTAMIA: HAMMURABI’S CODE

The Babylonians were an invading people who reunited the city states of
Mesopotamia by conquest. The victorious king, Hammurabi, reigned for forty-three
years, earning a reputation for justice and efficiency. His law code, from around
1700 B.C.E., consisted of 282 case laws written on a stone slab; it was discovered in
1901 in Iran. The code does not represent a careful y articulated philosophy of law
or the state, but rather highlights selected decisions the king and his officials
rendered for the purpose of providing precedents for just rulings.

• • •

When the lofty Anu, king of the Anunnaki, and Bel, lord of heaven and earth, he
who determines the destiny of the land, committed the rule of all mankind to
Marduk, the chief son of Ea; when they pronounced the lofty name of Babylon: when
they made it famous among the quarters of the world and in its midst established an
everlasting kingdom whose foundations were firm as heaven and earth—at that
time, Anu and Bel cal ed me, Hummurabi, the exalted prince, the worshiper of the
gods, to cause justice to prevail in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evil, to
prevent the strong from oppressing the weak … to enlighten the land and to further
the welfare of the people. Hammurabi, the governor named by Bel, am I, who brought about plenty and abundance;…

From The Code of Hammurabi, King of Babylon, trans. Rober t Francis Harper
(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1904), 3, 9, 11, 17, 19 , 29, 45, 51, 73, 75, 89,
99, 101, 103, 105. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

... who caused the four quarters of the world to render obedi ence. When Marduk
sent me to rule the people and to bring help to the country, I established law and
justice in the land and promoted the welfare of the people.

§1.

¶ If a man bring an accusation against a man, and charge hi
m with a [capital]

crime, but cannot prove it, he, the accuser, shal be put to d
eath.

§2.

¶ If a man charge a man with sorcery, and cannot prove it, h
e who is charged with
sorcery shal go to the river, into the river he shal throw hi
mself and if the river
overcome him, his accuser shal take to himself his house [e
state]. If the river show
that man to be innocent and he come forth unharmed, he w
ho charged him with
sorcery shal be put to death. He who threw himself into the
river shal take to himself the house of his accuser.

¶ If a man has come forward to bear witness to a felony and
 then has not proved the
statement he has made, if that case [is] a capital one, that
man shal be put to death.

¶ If a man aid a male or female slave of the palace, or a mal
e or female slave of a

¶ If a man aid a male or female slave of the palace, or a mal
e or female slave of a
freeman to escape from the city gate, he shal be put to dea
th.

¶ If a man seize a male or female slave, a fugitive, in the fiel
d and bring that [slave]

back to his owner, the owner of the slave shal pay him two
shekels of silver.

§23.

¶ If the brigand be not captured, the man who has been rob bed, shal , in the
presence of god, make an itemized statement of his loss, an d the city and the
governor, in whose province and jurisdiction the robbery wa s committed, shal compensate him for whatever was lost.

§24.

¶ If it be a life [that is lost], the city and governor shal pay o ne mana of silver to his heirs.

§26.

¶ If either an officer or a constable, who is ordered to go on an errand of the king,
do not go but hire a substitute and despatch him in his stea d, that officer or
constable shal be put to death; his hired substitute shal tak e to himself his [the officer’s] house.

§53.

¶ If a man neglect to strengthen his dyke and do not strengt
hen it, and a break be
made in his dyke and the water carry away the farm-
land, the man in whose dyke
the break has been made shal restore the grain which he h
as damaged.

§127.

¶ If a man point the finger at a priestess or the wife of anoth
er and cannot justify it,
they shal drag that man before the judges and they shal br
and his forehead.

§129.

¶ If the wife of a man be taken in lying with another man, th
ey shal bind them and
throw them into the water. If the husband of the woman wou
ld save his wife, or if
the king would save his male servant [he may].

§130.

¶ If a man force the [betrothed] wife of another who has not known a male and is
living in her father’s house, and he lie in her bosom and they take him, that man
shall be put to death and that woman shall go free.

§131.

¶ If a man accuse his wife and she has not been taken in lyi
ng with another man, she
shal take an oath in the name of god and she shal return to
 her house.

§132.

¶ If the finger have been pointed at the wife of a man becau
se of another man, and
she have not been taken in lying with another man, for her
husband’s sake she shal throw herself into the river.

§142.

¶ If a woman hate her husband, and say: “Thou shalt not ha
ve me,” they shal
inquire into her antecedents for her defects; and if she have
 been a careful mistress
and be without reproach and her husband have been going
about and greatly
belittling her, that woman has no blame. She shal receive h
er dowry and shal go to her father’s house.

§143.

¶ If she have not been a careful mistress, have gadded abou
t, have neglected her
house and have belittled her husband, they shal throw that
woman into the water.

§145.

¶ If a man take a wife and she do not present him with child
ren and he set his face
to take a concubine, that man may take a concubine and bri
ng her into his house.

That concubine shal not rank with his wife.

§196.

¶ If a man destroy the eye of another freeman [i.e., a man in the upper class], they shal destroy his eye.

§197.

¶ If one break a man’s bone, they shal break his bone.

§198.

¶ If one destroy the eye of a vil ein [a dependent laborer] or break the bone of a
freeman, he shal pay one mana of silver.

§199.

¶ If one destroy the eye of a man’s slave or break a bone of a man’s slave he shal pay one-half his price.

§200.

¶ If a man knock out a tooth of a man of his own rank, they shal knock out his tooth.

§201.

¶ If one knock out a tooth of a vil ein, he shal pay one-third mana of silver.

§203.

¶ If a man strike another man of his own rank, he shal pay one mana of silver.

§204.

¶ If a vil ein strike a vil ein, he shal pay ten shekels of silver.

§205.

¶ If a man’s slave strike a man’s son, they shal cut off his e ar.

§253.

¶ If a man hire a man to oversee his farm and furnish him th
e seed-grain and intrust
him with oxen and contract with him to cultivate the field, a
nd that man steal either
the seed or the crop and it be found in his possession, they
shal cut off his fingers.

§254.

¶ If he take the seed-
grain and overwork the oxen, he shal restore the quantity o
f grain which he has hoed.

The righteous laws, which Hammurabi, the wise king, establi
shed and [by which]

he gave the land stable support and pure government. Ham
murabi, the perfect king, am I....

The great gods proclaimed me and I am the guardian gover
nor, whose scepter is
righteous and whose beneficent protection is spread over m
y city....

The king, who is pre-
eminent among city kings, am I. My words are precious, my
wisdom is unrivaled....

If that man do not pay attention to my words which I have w
ritten upon my
monument: if he forget my curse and do not fear the curse
of god: if he abolish the
judgments which I have formulated, overrule my words, alte
r my statues, efface my
name written thereon and write his own name: on account o
f these curses, commission another to do so—
as for that man, be he king or lord, or priest-king or
commoner, whoever he may be, may the great god, the fath
er of the gods, who has
ordained my reign, take from him the glory of his sovereignt
y, may be break his scepter, and curse his fate!...

JEWISH LAW

Jewish settlers established a smal kingdom along the easter n Mediterranean between 1200 and 1100 B.C.E. The people may have develo ped elements of their religion and culture earlier—this is what is claimed in the initial stories of the Old Testament, particularly the book of Exodus. Jewish culture w as marked by its elaborate, intense religion, which featured the first durable articulation of monotheistic beliefs but also laws and religious rules of beh avior. Most of the book of Deuteronomy, from which the fol owing passages come, was written in the seventh century B.C.E., though elements of the laws themse lves had undoubtedly developed earlier.

• • •

You must be entirely faithful to Yahweh your God…. [A]nd Ya hweh said to me….

"The man who does not listen to my words that he speaks in my name, shal be held answerable to me for it. But the prophet who presumes to s ay in my name a thing I have not commanded him to say, or who speaks in the nam e of other gods, that prophet shal die."

You may say in your heart, "How are we to know what word was not spoken by Yahweh?" When a prophet speaks in the name of Yahweh an d the thing does not happen and the word is not fulfil ed, then it has not been sp oken by Yahweh.

If anyone has struck his fel ow accidental y, not having any previous feud with
him (for example, he goes with his fel ow into the forest to c ut wood; his arm
swings the axe to fel a tree; the head slips off the handle an d strikes his companion
dead), that man may take refuge in one of these cities and s ave his life. It must not
be al owed that the avenger of blood, in the heat of his ange r, should pursue the
kil er … for the man has not deserved to die, having had no previous feud with his companion….

But if it happens that a man has a feud with his fel ow and li es in wait for him
and fal s on him and wounds him fatal y and he dies, and th e man takes refuge in
one of these cities, the elders of his own town shal send to have him seized and
hand him over to the avenger of blood to die. You are to sho w him no pity. You
must banish the shedding of innocent blood from Israel, and then you wil prosper.

From The Jerusalem Bible, ed. Alexander Jones (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966) 241–48, 252–
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Boundaries

You must not displace your neighbour’s boundary mark, set by your forbears, in the
inheritance you receive in the land Yahweh is giving into you
r possession.

Witnesses

A single witness cannot suffice to convict a man of a crime o r offence of any kind;
whatever the misdemeanour, the evidence of two witnesses or three is required to sustain the charge.

If a malicious witness appears against a man to accuse him of rebel ion, both
parties to this dispute before Yahweh must be brought befor e the priests and judges
then in office. •The judges must make a careful inquiry, and if it turns out that the
witness who accused his brother is a lying witness, •you mu st deal with him as he
would have dealt with his brother. You must banish this evil f rom your midst.

•Others wil hear of it and be afraid and never again do such an evil thing among you. •You are to show no pity.

The “Lex Talionis”

Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot f or foot.

Captured Towns

When you advance to the attack on any town, first offer it te rms of peace. If it
accepts these and opens its gates to you, al the people to b e found in it shal do
forced labour for you and be subject to you….

When you go to war against your enemies and Yahweh your God delivers them

into your power and you take prisoners, •if you see a beautiful woman among the
prisoners and find her desirable, you may make her your wife •and bring her to your
home. She is to shave her head and cut her nails •and take off her prisoner's garb;
she is to stay inside your house and must mourn her father and mother for a full
month. Then you may go to her and be a husband to her, and she shall be your wife.

•Should she cease to please you, you will let her go where she wishes, not selling her
for money: you are not to make any profit out of her, since you have had the use of her....

If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not listen to the voice of his
father or the voice of his mother, and even when they punish him still will not pay
attention to them, •his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him out
to the elders of the town at the gate of that place. •And they shall say to the elders
of his town, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious and will not listen to us; he
is a wastrel and a drunkard." •Then all his fellow citizens shall stone him to death.

You must banish this evil from your midst. All Israel will hear of it and be afraid....

If a man marries a wife, and sleeps with her and then turns against her, and taxes
her with misconduct and publicly defames her by saying, "I married this woman and

when I slept with her I did not find the evidence of her virgin
ity," the girl's father
and mother must take her and produce the evidence of her
virginity before the
elders of the town at the gate. •The girl's father shal then d
eclare to the elders, "I
gave this man my daughter for a wife and he has turned ag
ainst her, •and now he
taxes her with misconduct: I found no evidence of virginity i
n your daughter, he
says. But the evidence of my daughter's virginity is here." A
nd they shal spread the
cloth out before the elders of the town. •Then the elders of t
he town shal take the
man and flog him •and fine him one hundred silver shekels f
or publicly defaming a
virgin of Israel, and give this money to the girl's father. She
shal remain his wife

virgin of Israel, and give this money to the girl's father. She
shal remain his wife
and as long as he lives he may not repudiate her.

But if the accusation that the girl cannot show the evidence
of virginity is
substantiated, •they shal take her to the door of her father'
s house and her fel ow
citizens shal stone her to death for having committed an inf
amy in Israel by
disgracing her father's House. You must banish this evil from
 your midst....

You must not al ow a master to imprison a slave who has es
caped from him and
come to you. •He shal live with you, among you, wherever

he pleases in any one of
your towns he chooses; you are not to molest him....

You are not to exploit the hired servant who is poor and dest itute, whether he is
one of your brothers or a stranger who lives in your towns. • You must pay him his
wage each day, not al owing the sun to set before you do, fo r he is poor and is
anxious for it; otherwise he may appeal to Yahweh against y ou, and it would be a sin for you....

When reaping the harvest in your field, if you have overlook ed a sheaf in that
field, do not go back for it. Leave it for the stranger, the orp han and the widow, so
that Yahweh your God may bless you in al your undertaking s....

When two men are fighting together, if the wife of one inter venes to protect her
husband from the other's blows by putting out her hand and seizing the other by the
private parts, •you shal cut her hand off and show no pity. ...

If you do not keep and observe al the words of this Law that are written in this
book, in the fear of this name of glory and awe: Yahweh your God, •Yahweh wil
strike you down with monstrous plagues, you and your desc endants: with plagues
grievous and lasting, diseases pernicious and enduring. •On ce more he wil bring on
you the diseases of Egypt that you dreaded, and they wil inf ect you. Further,

Yahweh wil bring on you every sickness, every plague, not mentioned in the Book of
this Law, until you perish. •There wil be only a handful of yo u left, you who were as many as the stars of heaven.

CHAPTER 3

POLITICAL IDEALS IN CHINA AND GREECE

Political life and the state were basic features of both Chines e and Mediterranean
civilization in the classical period. Both civilizations had a str ong secular emphasis,
with provision of appropriate political order a vital compone nt of successful
societies and with appropriate service to the state a vital co mponent of the good life.

But the forms of government and the specific political ideals differed greatly.

Political institutions and values are central topics for the clas sical period, when
governments expanded and key civilizations established dur able characteristics.

Comparison highlights both similarities and differences in thi s core feature of
classical societies. Precisely because the classical societies developed largely
separately, comparison provides vital analytical links while c al ing attention to basic issues in the period as a whole.

Confucianism was the most important single political philoso phy developed in
classical China; it has enduring influence on Chinese though t and politics even to the present day. Confucius (551–

476 B.C.E.) developed his emphases on the state, stable social hierarchy, and social and personal order at a time of disunity and strife in China. He claimed to be restoring traditional Chinese values, and a concept of balance may well have permeated Chinese culture from an earlier period, supporting the Confucian emphasis on personal restraint. By the time of the Han dynasty (202 B.C.E.–220 C.E.), however, emperors understood the importance of Confucian thinking in supporting the government and providing guidelines for the training of a growing bureaucracy.

In contrast to classical China under the Han dynasty, Athens was not a great empire, though it gained colonies. Rather, it was a Greek city-state. Like other city-states in the divided, mountainous peninsula, Athens generated an aristocratic government early on, after 800 B.C.E. But then it went through other political phases, some of which entailed greater involvement of ordinary citizens. By the fifth century, Athens had developed an extensive participatory democracy for those who did have full rights. It also became a leading commercial center and was the site of one of the most vibrant outpourings of art, literature, and philosophy the world has ever known. Pericles, the principal leader of Athens after the mid-fifth century, was an aristocrat who usually operated behind the scenes of the bustling democracy. He

was wel aware of his city’s diverse strengths. Pericles’ Fune
ral Oration, issued by
Athens’s main democratic leader (though of aristocratic orig
in) during the early
stages of the Peloponnesian War (between Athens and Spart
a, 431–404 B.C.E.), sought
to lay out the chief qualities of Athenian democracy.

Confucianism and Athenian democracy demonstrate the gre
at diversity possible in
the development of classical societies. Confucianism served
a strong, durable empire,
with the world’s first explicitly educated, centralizing bureau
cracy. Not surprisingly,
Confucian values and China’s government forms were repea
tedly revived and, in East
Asia, widely imitated, for they provided the most successful
political formula
devised by any civilization until modern times. Periclean Ath
ens, in contrast, failed
after exhaustion and defeat in the war with Sparta. Later so
cieties in the
Mediterranean retained a democratic element and certainly
a high esteem for
cultural achievements, but aristocratic or authoritarian rule
became more common.

cultural achievements, but aristocratic or authoritarian rule
became more common.

Yet the Periclean ideal, because it was so vividly stated in Th
ucydides’ history and
because it was associated with such unusual achievements i
n art and philosophy, did
not die. It became part of a complex Greek legacy to later s
ocieties, including those

of Western Europe and North America much later, when conditions ripened for a different kind of political democracy.

Questions

1. What political values do Pericles and Confucius share? Would they agree at all on the features of a good government, a good family, or a good servant of the state?

2. What are their main differences, and how would these show up in the way the two societies organized their governments and in what individuals expected from the state? How would Confucius react to the idea of a democracy? What kind of personality training does each passage suggest?

3. Both Pericles and Confucius discuss social inequality, directly or indirectly, along with gender and the role and use of wealth. What are the main differences in social views, and how do these relate to the larger political styles? How would Pericles and Confucius debate the role of merchants in a well-arranged society?

How would they defend social and economic inequality?

For Further Discussion

1. Does the comparison between these two great classical leaders suggest any reason why Confucianism had much greater importance in Chinese history than Pericles and his ideas gained in the larger history of the classical Mediterranean civilization and its successors?

2. How did Confucian and Greek ideas about proper human behavior and the importance of political goals compare with the emerging ideas of Hinduism?

3. What changes had occurred in Greek politics by Pericles' time? What were the continuities in political and social values?

4. Why did some early Chinese leaders dislike Confucianism?

CONFUCIANISM: CHINESE POLITICAL VALUES

The following Confucian passage is entitled "The Great Learning." Its origin is uncertain. It may have been written by Confucius himself, but possibly some early followers devised it in the Confucian spirit. The passage was certainly completed by 200 B.C.E. It gained further importance from the attention given to it by a later, neo-Confucian philosopher, Chu Hsi (1120–1200 C.E.), and by the fourteenth century C.E.

it had become a standard part of China's civil service examination.

• • •

The Way of learning to be great (or adult education) consists in manifesting the clear character, loving the people, and abiding (chih) in the highest good.

Only after knowing what to abide in can one be calm. Only after having been

calm can one be tranquil. Only after having achieved tranqu il ity can one have
peaceful repose. Only after having peaceful repose can one begin to deliberate. Only
after deliberation can the end be attained. Things have their roots and branches.

Affairs have their beginnings and their ends. To know what i s first and what is last wil lead one near the Way.

The ancients who wished to manifest their clear character to the world would
first regulate their families. Those who wished to bring order to their states would

first regulate their families. Those who wished to bring order to their states would
first regulate their families. Those who wished to regulate th eir families would first
cultivate their personal lives. Those who wished to rectify th eir minds would first
make their wil s sincere. Those who wished to make their wil s sincere would first
extend their knowledge. … when the mind is rectified, the p ersonal life is cultivated;
when the personal life is cultivated, the family wil be regula ted; when the family is
regulated, the state wil be in order; and when the state is in order, there wil be
peace throughout the world. From the Son of Heaven [the E mperor] down to the
common people, al must regard cultivation of the personal l ife as the root or
foundation. There is never a case when the root is in disorde r and yet the branches are in order.…

From Wing Tsit Chan, ed., A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), 86–92, 94. © 1963 Princeton University Press, 1991 renewed PUP. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

The Book of Odes says, “How profound was King Wen! How he maintained his brilliant virtue without interruption and regarded with reverence that which he abided (chih).” As a ruler, he abided in humanity. As a minister, he abided in reverence. As a son, he abided in filial piety. As a father, he abided in deep love. And in dealing with the people of the country, he abided in faithfulness.

The Book of Odes says,…“How grave and how dignified” indicates precaution.

“How majestic and distinguished” expresses awe-inspiring appearance. “Here is our elegant and accomplished prince. We can never forget him” means that the people cannot forget his eminent character and perfect virtue. The Book of Odes says, “Ah!

the ancient kings are not forgotten.” [Future] rulers deemed worthy what they deemed worthy and loved what they loved, while the common people enjoyed what they enjoyed and benefited from their beneficial arrangements. That was why they are not forgotten even after they passed away.…

Confucius said, “In hearing litigations, I am as good as anyone. What is necessary

is to enable people not to have litigations at al .” Those who would not tel the truth
wil not dare to finish their words, and a great awe would be struck into people’s minds. This is cal ed knowing the root….

What is meant by “making the wil sincere” is al owing no se lf-deception, as when
we hate a bad smel or love a beautiful color. This is cal ed s atisfying oneself.

Therefore the superior man wil always be watchful over him self when alone. When
the inferior man is alone and leisurely, there is no limit to w hich he does not go in
his evil deeds. Only when he sees a superior man does he th en try to disguise
himself, concealing the evil and showing off the good in him. But what is the use?

For other people see him as if they see his very heart. That i s what is meant by
saying that what is true in a man’s heart wil be shown in his outward appearance.

Therefore the superior man wil always be watchful over him self when alone….

What is meant by saying that in order to govern the state it i s necessary first to
regulate the family is this: There is no one who cannot teach his own family and yet
can teach others. Therefore the superior man (ruler) without going beyond his
family, can bring education into completion in the whole sta te. Filial piety is that
with which one serves his ruler. Brotherly respect is that wit

h which one serves his
elders, and deep love is that with which one treats the multi
tude. … Therefore the
superior man must have the good qualities in himself before
he may require them in
other people. He must not have the bad qualities in himself
before he may require
others not to have them. There has never been a man who
does not cherish altruism
(shu) in himself and yet can teach other people. Therefore t
he order of the state

(shu) in himself and yet can teach other people. Therefore t
he order of the state
depends on the regulation of the family.…

What is meant by saying that peace of the world depends o
n the order of the state
is this: When the ruler treats the elders with respect, then th
e people wil be aroused
toward filial piety. When the ruler treats the aged with respe
ct, then the people wil
be aroused toward brotherly respect. When the ruler treats c
ompassionately the
young and the helpless, then the common people wil not fol
ow the opposite course.

Therefore the ruler has a principle with which, as with a mea
suring square, he may regulate his conduct.…

Therefore the ruler wil first be watchful over his own virtue.
If he has virtue, he
wil have the people with him. If he has the people with him,
he wil have the
territory. If he has the territory, he wil have wealth. And if h

e has wealth, he wil
have its use. Virtue is the root, while wealth is the branch….

There is a great principle for the production of wealth. If ther e are many
producers and few consumers, and if people who produce w ealth do so quickly and
those who spend it do so slowly, then wealth wil always be sufficient. A man of
humanity develops his personality by means of his wealth, while the inhumane
person develops wealth at the sacrifice of his personality. Th ere has never been a
case of a ruler who loved humanity and whose people did no t love righteousness.

There has never been a case where the people loved righteo usness and yet the affairs
of the state have not been carried to completion. And there has never been a case
where in such a state the wealth col ected in the national tre asury did not continue in the possession of the ruler.

ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY: PERICLES' FUNERAL ORATION

Pericles was born about 495 B.C.E. An aristocrat who lived a polished life, his oratory
could stir the masses of Athenian citizens. He led the city, wi th few interruptions,
from 461 until his death in 429 and was active in advancing its empire as a source
of funds. His Funeral Oration was delivered in the winter of 4 31–430 to honor early
Athenian victims of the war with Sparta. A version of the spe ech was featured in the
History of the Peloponnesian War by the historian Thucydide

s, who admired Pericles
but who preferred outright aristocratic rule to what he saw a
s the whims of the masses in democracy.

• • •

I shal speak first of our ancestors, for it is right and at the s
ame time fitting, on an
occasion like this, to give them this place of honour in recal i
ng what they did. For
this land of ours, in which the same people have never ceas
ed to dwel in an
unbroken line of successive generations, they by their valou
r transmitted to our times a free state.

From Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, Vol. 1 L
oeb Classical Library®.

Vol. 108, trans. Charles Smith (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U
niversity Press, 1919–

1923), 321, 323, 325, 327, 329, 335, 337, 339, 341. Copyrig
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And not only are they worthy of our praise, but our fathers s
til more; for they,
adding to the inheritance which they received, acquired the
empire we now possess
and bequeathed it, not without toil, to us who are alive to-
day. And we ourselves
here assembled, who are now for the most part stil in the pr
ime of life, have further

here assembled, who are now for the most part stil in the pr ime of life, have further
strengthened the empire in most respects, and have provide d our city with al
resources, so that it is sufficient for itself both in peace and i n war....

We live under a form of government which does not emulate the institutions of
our neighbours; on the contrary, we are ourselves a model which some fol ow,
rather than the imitators of other peoples. It is true that our government is cal ed a
democracy, because its administration is in the hands, not o f the few, but of the
many; yet while as regards the law al men are on an equalit y for the settlement of
their private disputes, as regards the value set on them it is as each man is in any
way distinguished that he is preferred to public honours, not because he belongs to a
particular class, but because of personal merits; nor, again, on the ground of poverty
is a man barred from a public career by obscurity of rank if h e but has it in him to
do the state a service. And not only in our public life are we l iberal, but also as
regards our freedom from suspicion of one another in the pu rsuits of every-day life;
for we do not feel resentment at our neighbour if he does as he likes, nor yet do we
put on sour looks which, though harmless, are painful to beh old. But while we thus
avoid giving offence in our private intercourse, in our public life we are restrained
from lawlessness chiefly through reverent fear, for we rende

r obedience to those in
authority and to the laws, and especial y to those laws whic h are ordained for the
succour of the oppressed and those which, though unwritten , bring upon the
transgressor a disgrace which al men recognize.

Moreover, we have provided for the spirit many relaxations f rom toil: we have
games and sacrifices regularly throughout the year and hom es fitted out with good
taste and elegance; and the delight we each day find in thes e things drives away
sadness. And our city is so great that al the products of al t he earth flow in upon
us, and ours is the happy lot to gather in the good fruits of o ur own soil with no more home-
felt security of enjoyment than we do those of other lands.…

For we are lovers of beauty yet with no extravagance and lo vers of wisdom yet
without weakness. Wealth we employ rather as an opportuni ty for action than as a
subject for boasting; and with us it is not a shame for a man to acknowledge
poverty, but the greater shame is for him not to do his best to avoid it. And you wil
find united in the same persons an interest at once in privat e and in public affairs,
and in others of us who give attention chiefly to business, yo u wil find no lack of
insight into political matters. For we alone regard the man w ho takes no part in
public affairs, not as one who minds his own business, but a s good for nothing; and
we Athenians decide public questions for ourselves or at lea

st endeavour to arrive at
a sound understanding of them, in the belief that it is not de
bate that is a hindrance
to action, but rather not to be instructed by debate before t
he time comes for action.

For in truth we have this point also of superiority over other
men, to be most daring
in action and yet at the same time most given to reflection u
pon the ventures we
mean to undertake; with other men, on the contrary, boldne
ss means ignorance and reflection brings hesitation....

You must daily fix your gaze upon the power of Athens and b
ecome lovers of her,
and when the vision of her greatness has inspired you, refle
ct that al this has been
acquired by men of courage who knew their duty and in the
hour of conflict were
moved by a high sense of honour, who, if ever they failed in
any enterprise, were
resolved that at least their country should not find herself d
eserted by their valour,
but freely sacrificed to her the fairest offering it was in their
power to give. For they
gave their lives for the common weal, and in so doing won f
or themselves the praise
which grows not old. … Do you, therefore, now make these
men your examples, and
judging freedom to be happiness and courage to be freedom
, be not too anxious

judging freedom to be happiness and courage to be freedom
, be not too anxious
about the dangers of war. For it is not those that are in evil p
light who have the best

excuse for being unsparing of their lives, for they have no hope of better days, but
rather those who run the risk, if they continue to live, of the opposite reversal of
fortune, and those to whom it makes the greatest difference if they suffer a disaster.

For to a manly spirit more bitter is humiliation associated with cowardice than
death when it comes unperceived in close company with stalwart deeds and public hopes....

If I am to speak also of womanly virtues, referring to those of you who wil
henceforth be in widowhood, I wil sum up al in a brief admonition: Great is your
glory if you fal not below the standard which nature has set for your sex, and great
also is hers of whom there is least talk among men whether in praise or in blame.

CHAPTER 4

SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Al the classical civilizations paid considerable attention to organizing and justifying
extensive social inequality. But the systems of hierarchy, and the thinking behind
them, varied greatly. The two passages below discuss India's caste system and
Roman slavery. Both documents lay out some of the fundamental features of the two
systems (in the case of the Roman legal document, the key statement comes at the
end). But both also grapple with gray areas in the systems. I

n the Roman case,
lawyers focused on cases in which slaves might be freed (m anumitted) and what
their status would be as a result. In India, the caste system i nvited consideration of
what would happen if people in a given caste did work outsi de normal caste
boundaries, or even intermarried with another caste. Neithe r of these situations was
normal. That is, although manumission was common in Rom e, most slaves were
never freed; and most people in India stayed within their ca ste boundaries. But
unusual problems can bring out underlying assumptions. Ho w did Roman and
Indian jurists compare in their views of what social inequalit y was al about, how
rigid it should be, how people came to be in the lower orders (slaves or servants or
untouchables), and how inequality could be enforced? Comp arison contributes to
understanding the role of social structure in the classical wo rld.

There is much omitted from the documents. Roman law, mo st obviously, said
nothing about the tasks slaves did. These in fact could vary widely, from dreadful
labor in mines to household service or even tutoring upper-class children. Indian law
shows how different kinds of jobs were associated with key c astes. Neither document
uncovers trends: slavery spread in Rome, undermining free l abor and reducing the
motivation to improve production technology; India’s caste s ystem, though it

became more complex and moved into additional parts of th e subcontinent, was
fairly stable in essence. An omission in the Roman documen t even suggests one of
the tricky features of using the existence of a law as evidenc e of how it affected
people’s lives: the document describes an improvement in t he legal protection of
slaves, which did occur as far as the law itself was concerne d; what the document
does not reveal is that the treatment of slaves deteriorated as the Roman economy
came to depend more heavily on slave labor. After al , few sl aves could easily invoke the law on their own behalf.

One other complication: Roman thinking about slavery influe nced later Western
slave systems, but Roman slave law obviously differed from laws in the subsequent
slaveholding societies in the Americas. Notably, there was n o particular racial
element in Rome, though foreignness was a factor. Roman sl avery more directly
influenced slavery in the Middle East, including the Byzantin e Empire, after Rome itself fel .

India’s castes seem to have originated when the Indo-Europeans overran previous
inhabitants of the subcontinent. Various epics (vedas) refer t o the formation of
castes. The caste system was unusual in slotting people to c ertain social levels by
birth and regulating contact among castes as wel as jobs. P eople could move within
castes, acquiring more or less money; but the system was f undamental y static,

justified by a religion that argued that living up to caste duti es in one life prepared a
person for advancement, through reincarnation, in the next existence. The caste
system solidified over time, gradual y spreading through mo re of India and

system solidified over time, gradual y spreading through mo re of India and
becoming more intricate, with scores of specific castes. The caste system persisted in
India into the twentieth century. Now outlawed, the system has left its mark: caste
origins stil define considerable social barriers in Indian socie ty. This system, in sum, is a basic feature of Indian history.

Questions

1. What was manumission in the Roman slave system; why would it have no applicability in India's caste system?

2. What kind of religious arguments supported the caste system? How did Roman law argue that slavery was compatible with justice? How is it clear, from Roman law, that slaves did not constitute a caste?

3. Were lower castes in India more or less free than Roman slaves? How might an Indian apologist argue that the caste system was a relatively beneficent form of social inequality?

For Further Discussion

1. Why did classical societies uniformly develop radical social inequality, and why were almost al major religious and political leaders comfortable in justifying it?

2. How do the Roman and Indian systems of inequality compare with systems of inequality (and their justifications) in modern industrial societies?

3. Which would be better, in terms of quality of life: to be a Roman slave or a lower-caste Indian?

I NDIA'S CASTE SYSTEM: THE LAWS OF MANU

The Laws of Manu was written between the first century B.C.E. and the second or third century C.E., constituting the first systematic compilati

on of Indian law. Early
legal statements had been extracted from the Indian epics. The Laws of Manu
maintained a close relationship with Hinduism, and indeed Manu, the creator god,
gave divine sanction to the social system. Other religious el ements, such as the idea
of pol ution inherent in farming because of the need to kil e ven smal creatures,
were used to justify the laws' social prescriptions. The Laws of Manu provided the
basic classification of the caste system, though the original f our castes later
expanded greatly. Note the relationship also to views of gen der and the inferiority of
women, and the low valuation of manual labor.

• • •

[87] But to protect this whole creation, the lustrous one mad e separate innate
activities for those born of his mouth, arms, thighs, and feet. [88] For priests, he
ordained teaching and learning, sacrificing for themselves a nd sacrificing for others,
giving, and receiving. [89] Protecting his subjects, giving, ha ving sacrifices
performed, studying and remaining unaddicted to the senso ry objects are… for a
ruler. Protecting his livestock… trading, lending money, and farming the land are for
a commoner. The Lord assigned only one activity to a serva nt; serving these [other]

classes without resentment.

[95] A ruler in adversity may also make a living by al of the se (means); but he
should never be so proud as to assume the livelihood of his betters. [96] If a man of
the lowest caste should, through greed, make his living by t he innate activities of his
superiors, the king should confiscate his wealth and banish him immediately. [97]

One’s own duty, (even) without any good qualities, is better than someone else’s
duty wel done; for a man who makes his living by someone else’s duty immediately

duty wel done; for a man who makes his living by someone else’s duty immediately
fal s from (his own) caste. [98] A commoner who cannot ma ke a living by his own
duty may also subsist by the livelihood of a servant; but he must not commit actions
that (he) should not do, and he should stop when he can. [9 9] If a servant is unable
to engage in the service of the twice-
born and is on the brink of losing his sons and
wife, he may make a living by the innate activities of a man ual labourer, [100]

practising those activities of a manual labourer and those va rious handicrafts by which the twice-born are served.

[101] A priest who remains on his own path and does not en gage in the
commoner’s livelihood, even when he is fainting and starvin g for lack of a
livelihood, should act in keeping with the fol owing law: [102] a priest in adversity

may accept gifts from anyone, for the assertion that ‘What i s purifying can be
defiled’ is not established by law. [103] Accepting gifts from despicable people or
teaching them or sacrificing for them is not a fault in priests, for they are the equals
of fire or water. [104] A man who eats the food of anyone, n o matter who, when he
is on the brink of losing his life is not smeared with evil, just as the sky is not smeared with mud.…

From The Laws of Manu, trans. with an introduction and note s by Wendy Doniger
and with Brian K. Smith (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Boo ks, 1991), 12–33, 242–

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[112] A priest who cannot make a living should even glean (ears of corn) and
gather (single grains) from any (field) whatsoever; gleaning is better than accepting
gifts, and gathering is preferable even to that.…

[117] Neither a priest nor a ruler should lend money at inter est, but (either) may,
if he real y wishes, and for religious purposes, lend at very l ow interest to a very evil man.

[118] A ruler in extremity who takes even a quarter (of the c rop) is free from offence if he protects his subjects to his ut most ability. [119] His own duty is
conquest, and he must not turn his back on a chal enge; wh en he has protected the
commoner with his sword, he may col ect the just tax from h

im: [120] the tax on
grain from the commoners is one eighth, (or) one twentieth, (or) at least one

‘scratch-
penny.’ Servants, artisans, and craftsmen should give him th e service of their innate activities.…

[123] Serving priests alone is recommended as the best inn ate activity of a
servant; for whatever he does other than this bears no fruit f or him. [124] They
should assign him a livelihood out of their own family proper ty according to his
deserts, taking into account his ability, his skil , and the nu mber of his dependants.

[125] They should give him the leftovers of their food, their old clothes, the spoiled parts of their grain, and their worn-out household utensils.

[126] A servant cannot commit any crime that causes him t o fal , nor does he
deserve any transformative ritual; he has no authority to car ry out duties, nor is he
forbidden to carry out duties. [127] But servants who want t o carry out duties, who
know duty, and who emulate the duties of good men, witho ut reciting Vedic verses,
are not defiled but praised. [128] For the more a servant un dertakes the behavior of
good men, without resentment, the more he gains this world and the next, blameless.

[129] A servant should not amass wealth, even if he has the ability, for a servant

who has amassed wealth annoys priests.

ROMAN SLAVERY

The Roman slave law evolved gradual y, from the republic o nward. The passage
below is from a textbook written in the second century C.E. by a jurist named Gaius.

It pul ed together a great deal of prior legislation, particularl y the Lex [law] Aelia
Sentia of 4 C.E., early in the empire. The text claims, of cour se, that wise emperors
had steadily improved the treatment of slaves. The law also reflects Roman belief in natural laws—
laws that fol ow from the inherent order of nature—
from which man-
made law derived. Final y, the code reflected the importanc e, and the limits, of the
status of citizen, an area in which Rome was like Athens in i mposing strict
definitions. Along with the belief that slaves were property, citizenship status helped
mark off the boundaries of slave life—
though, in contrast to the caste system of
India, the boundaries were not impenetrable.

• • •

(1) Every community that is governed by laws and customs uses partly its own
particular law and partly the law common to al mankind. Fo r whatever system of
justice each community establishes for itself, that is its own particular law and is
cal ed ‘civil law’ as the law particular to that community (civ

itas), while that which
natural reason has established among al human beings is o bserved equal y by al
peoples, and is cal ed ‘law of nations’ (ius gentium) since it i s the standard of justice
which al mankind observes. Thus the Roman People in part fol ows its own
particular system of justice and in part the common law of a l mankind. We shal
note what this distinction implies in particular instances at t he relevant point.…

(9) The principal distinction made by the law of persons is th is, that al human beings are either free men or slaves.

(10) Next, some free men are free-
born (ingenui), others freedmen (libertini).

(11) The free-
born are those who were free when they were born; freedme n are
those who have been released from a state of slavery.…

Subjects

(13) The Lex Aelia Sentia requires that any slaves who had b
een put in chains as a
punishment by their masters or had been branded or interro
gated under torture
about some crime of which they were found to be guilty; an
d any who had been
handed over to fight as gladiators or with wild beasts, or ha
d belonged to a troupe
of gladiators or had been imprisoned; should, if the same ow
ner or any subsequent
owner manumits them, become free men of the same status
as subject foreigners....

(14) 'Subject foreigners' is the name given to those who had
once fought a regular
war against the Roman People, were defeated, and gave the
mselves up.

(15) We wil never accept that slaves who have suffered a di
sgrace of this kind can
become either Roman citizens or Latins (whatever the proce
dure of manumission
and whatever their age at the time, even if they were in thei
r masters' ful
ownership); we consider that they should always be held to
have the status of subjects.

From Thomas Wiedemann, Greek and Roman Slavery (Londo
n: Routledge, 1997), 23–
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rmission of the publisher.

Citizens

(16) But if a slave has suffered no such disgrace, he sometimes becomes a Roman citizen when he is manumitted, and sometimes a Latin....

(19) A just reason for manumission exists when, for example, a man manumits in the presence of a council a natural son, daughter, brother or sister; or a child he has brought up, or his paedagogus [the slave whose job it had been to look after him as a child], or a slave whom he wants to employ as his manager (procurator), or a slave girl whom he intends to marry.

(20)... Slaves over thirty can in fact be manumitted at any time; so that manumissions can even take place when the Praetor or Proconsul is passing by on his way to the baths or theatre, for instance.

(21) Furthermore, a slave under thirty can become a Roman citizen by manumission if he has been declared free in the Wil of an insolvent master and appointed as his heir [i.e. to take over the liabilities: the heres necessarius], provided that he is not excluded by another heir....

Digression—Subjects

(25) But those who have the status of subjects cannot receive anything at al by Wil , no more than any foreigner can, and according to the general opinion, they cannot make a Wil themselves.

(26) The lowest kind of freedom is therefore that of those w hose status is that of
subjects; and no statute, Senate Recommendation or Imperi al Constitution gives them access to Roman citizenship.

(27) They are even banned from the city of Rome or anywhe re within the hundredth
milestone from Rome, and any who break this law have to b e sold publicly together
with their property, subject to the condition that they must never serve as slaves in
the city of Rome or within a hundred miles of Rome, and tha t they must never be
manumitted; if they are manumitted, the law stipulates that they become slaves of the Roman People….

(39) Just reasons for manumission exist where, for instance, someone manumits his
father or mother, or his paedagogus, or someone who has b een brought up with him.

…

(43) Those who own more than two and not more than ten sl aves are al owed to
manumit up to half the number; those who own more than t en and not more than
thirty are al owed to manumit up to a third; but those who o wn more than thirty
and not more than a hundred have the right to manumit up to a quarter; and final y,
those who own more than a hundred and not more than five hundred are al owed to
manumit not more than a fifth; those who own more than fiv e hundred are not given the right to manumit any more—
the law forbids anyone to manumit more

than a hundred. But if you only own one or two slaves, you a re not covered by this
law, and there are no restrictions upon your freedom to man umit.…

(52) Slaves are in the power of their owners. This power is d erived from the
common law of nations, for we can see that among al natio ns alike owners have the
power of life and death over their slaves, and whatever is ac quired by a slave is acquired on behalf of his owner.

(53) But nowadays neither Roman citizens nor any other pe ople who are subject to
the sovereignty of the Roman People have the right to treat their slaves with
excessive and unreasonable brutality. For a Constitution of t he Divine Emperor
Antoninus orders anyone who kil s his own slave without du e reason to be brought

Antoninus orders anyone who kil s his own slave without du e reason to be brought
to justice in exactly the same way as one who kil s another’s slave. Excessively harsh
treatment on the part of owners is also limited by a Constitu tion of the same
Emperor; for when certain provincial governors asked him fo r a ruling regarding
slaves who had taken refuge at the temples of gods or statu es of emperors, he
declared that owners were to be forced to sel their slaves if the cruelty of their behaviour appeared to be unbearable.

CHAPTER 5

CONDITIONS OF WOMEN IN THE CLASSICAL CIVILIZATIONS

China and India

Like the early civilizations, al the classical centers of civiliza tion were patriarchal societies, in which women were treated as inferiors to men a nd, in some respects, as their property. Materials from China and India abundantly il ustrate women's inferiority. They also obviously contrast with predominant m odern values, where inequality is at least more contested. Yet, it is important not to oversimplify classical patriarchy. Women were not absolutely powerless. By observ ing certain behaviors and by using various private or even public recourses availa ble to them, they might gain partial control over their condition. This important com plexity in patriarchy also emerges from presentations of women in the laws and l iterature of classical societies. Of course, these materials offer only partial insigh t into women's real lives; they suggest standards for women more than real behaviors , and their relevance varied with social class. Even the cultural discussions of wo men, however, suggest how some women might use existing standards to their ben efit or, by force of personality, might even defy the standards to some degree. The discussions also demonstrate important disagreements within classical socie ties, even among dominant men, over exactly how women should be treated. Here, it is particularly

important to assess the extent to which defenders of wome
n real y offered different
evaluations of women's rights and qualities—
a particularly interesting issue in Rome.

Paying attention to women in world history presents some c
hal enges, in part
because of lack of sources, in part because women's inferior
 conditions hinder an
understanding of their potential range of activity. Compariso
n helps show
differences as wel as similarities in patterns of inferiority, o
pening the topic for more sophisticated analysis.

Each of the classical societies offered a somewhat different
version of patriarchal
inequality. Chinese materials reflect the Confucian emphasis
 on hierarchy and on
order, while also il ustrating certain opportunities for inform
al expression for
women within this system. In India women's conditions were
 more commonly
portrayed in terms of religion and intense emotion, with an
emphasis on moral duty
but also more frequent reference to attachments through lo
ve and beauty.

The selections that fol ow constitute cultural evidence—
beliefs held by men and at least some women—
of women's inferiority and separate roles. Culture is very
powerful, and that helps explain why women, taught ideas o
f these sorts from
girlhood, might accept their distinct conditions. But culture i
s not the only story of
women and gender relations. Societies also have birthrates,
specific work

assignments, and educational systems, al of which may be i nfluenced by beliefs but
which also may vary or change for other reasons. These part s of the picture also
affect women powerful y. We lack details in many of these ar eas for the classical
period, which is one reason for relying on cultural document ation. Furthermore,
cultures not only helped shape actual conditions but also te nded to persist, which
explains why ideas formed in classical civilizations lasted so long. One of the
Chinese documents cited below, from a manual by the uppe r-class woman author
Ban Zhao, was stil being used to educate women in China a s late as the nineteenth

Ban Zhao, was stil being used to educate women in China a s late as the nineteenth century.

Questions

1. Did any of the classical cultures authorize men to think th ey could treat women any way they saw fit?

2. How do Chinese ideas about women reflect larger Confuci an values? How do
Indian ideas mirror larger religious and social beliefs? (Note: Indian thinkers
disagreed about whether women would need to be reincarn ated as men to reach a higher spiritual plane.)

3. What would Chinese and Indian thinkers agree about, wh ere women are
concerned? Where would they disagree? Did their ideal wom en embody the same
characteristics? Which society produced greater emphasis o n factors such as
emotion and love in describing relations between men and o therwise inferior women?

4. Standards for women produced measurements of inadequ acy. How do the Indian
and Chinese materials differ in suggesting why a husband m ight want to reject a wife?

5. What hints do the fol owing materials give about how wo men could survive in
classical, patriarchal societies? What kinds of women had th e most power?

(Answering this question provides an important clue to the li ves of many real
women in patriarchal families.) Could women make any clai ms to fair treatment
in any of the societies? How could a Chinese woman make a

case, within the
cultural system, that she was not getting what she needed t
o fulfil her obligations
as a woman? Could Roman or Indian women make such a ca
se, and would it resemble China's?

For Further Discussion

1. Why did patriarchal conditions develop so widely? Why di
dn't women rebel against them?

2. Why was there less gender inequality in the lower classes
than in the upper classes in the classical period?

3. Judging by the cultural standards, were women better off
in classical India or classical China.

4. What other kinds of evidence, besides stories and prescri
ptions, is essential to
evaluating women's conditions in the past?

CHINA: "MOTHER OF MENCIUS" AND BAN ZHAO

Chinese authors paid considerable attention to women durin
g the Han dynasty. The
fol owing three selections show various facets of patriarchal
beliefs: the devoted
mother, a bad wife, and a standard statement of women's c
haracteristics and duties.

Do they fit together consistently? The first selection is from
Biographies of Heroic
Women written by the eminent scholar Liu Xiang in about 79
–78 B.C.E. Mencius was
a Confucian philosopher who lived from about 372 to 289 B.
C.E. and who was widely
revered. Because he was left fatherless, his mother played a

great role in raising him,
and the stories about her provided standard examples of ma
ternal ideals. The second
selection is from the most famous Han text on women's virt
ue, by Ban Zhao (ca. 45–

116 C.E.); she was a prominent woman scholar whose own li
fe would seem to contradict the values she preached.

• • •

THE MOTHER OF MENCIUS

The mother of Mencius lived in Zou in a house near a cemet
ery. When Mencius was
a little boy he liked to play burial rituals in the cemetery, ha
ppily building tombs
and grave mounds. His mother said to herself, "This is no pl
ace to bring up my son."

She moved near the marketplace in town. Mencius then play
ed merchant games
of buying and sel ing. His mother again said, "This is no plac
e to bring up my son."

So once again she moved, this time next to a school house.
Mencius then played
games of ancestor sacrifices and practiced the common cou
rtesies between students
and teachers. His mother said, "At last, this is the right place
for my son!" There they remained.

From Patricia Buckley Ebrey, ed., Chinese Civilization: A Sour
cebook (2nd ed., New York: Free Press, 1993), 72–
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on & Schuster Adult Publishing Group.

When Mencius grew up he studied the six arts of propriety, music, archery,
charioteering, writing, and mathematics. Later he became a famous Confucian
scholar. Superior men commented that Mencius's mother kn ew the right influences
for her sons. The Book of Songs says, "That admirable lady, what wil she do for them!"

When Mencius was young, he came home from school one d ay and found his
mother was weaving at the loom. She asked him, "Is school out already?"

He replied, "I left because I felt like it."

His mother took her knife and cut the finished cloth on her l oom. Mencius was
startled and asked why. She replied, "Your neglecting your st udies is very much like
my cutting the cloth. The superior person studies to establis h a reputation and gain
wide knowledge. He is calm and poised and tries to do no wr ong. If you do not
study now, you wil surely end up as a menial servant and w il never be free from
troubles. It would be just like a woman who supports herself by weaving to give it
up. How long could such a person depend on her husband a nd son to stave off
hunger? If a woman neglects her work or a man gives up th e cultivation of his

character, they may end up as common thieves if not slaves !”

Shaken, from then on Mencius studied hard from morning to night. He studied the philosophy of the master and eventual y became a famous Confucian scholar.

Superior men observed that Mencius’s mother understood t he way of motherhood.

The Book of Songs says, “That admirable lady, what wil she tel them!”

After Mencius was married, one day as he was going into his private quarters, he encountered his wife not ful y dressed. Displeased, Mencius stopped going into his wife’s room. She then went to his mother, begged to be sent home, and said, “I have heard that the etiquette between a man and a woman does not apply in their private room. But lately I have been too causal, and when my husba nd saw me improperly dressed, he was displeased. He is treating me like a strange r. It is not right for a woman to live as a guest; therefore, please send me back to my parents.”

Mencius’s mother cal ed him to her and said, “It is polite to i nquire before you enter a room. You should make some loud noise to warn any one inside, and as you enter, you should keep your eyes low so that you wil not e mbarrass anyone. Now,

enter, you should keep your eyes low so that you wil not e
mbarrass anyone. Now,
you have not behaved properly, yet you are quick to blame
others for their impropriety. Isn’t that going a little too far?”

Mencius apologized and took back his wife. Superior men sai
d that his mother understood the way to be a mother-in-law.

When Mencius was living in Qi, he was feeling very depresse
d. His mother saw
this and asked him, “Why are you looking so low?”…

Mencius answered, “I have heard that the superior man judg
es his capabilities and
then accepts a position. … Today my ideas are not being use
d in Qi, so I wish to go
somewhere else. But I am worried because you are getting t
oo old to travel about the country.”

His mother answered, “A woman’s duties are to cook the fiv
e grains, heat the wine, look after her parents-in-
law, make clothes, and that is al ! Therefore, she
cultivates the skil s required in the women’s quarters and ha
s no ambition to
manage affairs outside of the house. The Book of Changes s
ays, ‘In her central place,
she attends to the preparation of the food.’ The Book of Son
gs says, ‘It wil be theirs
neither to do wrong nor to do good, / Only about the spirits
and the food wil they
have to think.’ This means that a woman’s duty is not to con
trol or to take charge.

Instead she must fol ow the ‘three submissions.’ When she i
s young, she must submit
to her parents. After her marriage, she must submit to her h

usband. When she is
widowed, she must submit to her son. These are the rules of
propriety. Now you are
an adult and I am old; therefore, whether you go depends o
n what you consider
right, whether I fol ow depends on the rules of propriety.”

Superior men observed that Mencius’s mother knew the pro
per course for women.

The Book of Songs says, “Serenely she looks and smiles, / W
ithout any impatience she delivers her instructions.”

BAN ZHAO’S ADMONITIONS FOR WOMEN

Humility

In ancient times, on the third day after a girl was born, peopl
e placed her at the base
of the bed, gave her a pot shard to play with, and made a sa
crifice to announce her
birth. She was put below the bed to show that she was lowly
 and weak and should
concentrate on humbling herself before others. Playing with
a shard showed that she
should get accustomed to hard work and concentrate on bei
ng diligent. Announcing
her birth to the ancestors showed that she should focus on c
ontinuing the sacrifices.

These three customs convey the unchanging path for wome
n and the ritual traditions.

Humility means yielding and acting respectful, putting other
s first and oneself
last, never mentioning one’s own good deeds or denying on
e’s own faults, enduring
insults and bearing with mistreatment, al with due trepidati
on. Industriousness
means going to bed late, getting up early, never shirking wo
rk morning or night,
never refusing to take on domestic work, and completing ev
erything that needs to be
done neatly and careful y. Continuing the sacrifices means s
erving one’s husband-
master with appropriate demeanor, keeping oneself clean a
nd pure, never joking or
laughing, and preparing pure wine and food to offer to the a
ncestors.

There has never been a woman who had these three traits a nd yet ruined her reputation or fel into disgrace. If a woman loses these three traits, she wil have no name to preserve and wil not be able to avoid shame.

Devotion

According to the rites, a man is obligated to take a second w ife but nothing is written about a woman marrying twice. Hence the saying, “A husband is one’s Heaven: one cannot flee Heaven; one cannot leave a husba nd.” Heaven punishes those whose actions offend the spirits; a husband looks dow n on a wife who violates the rites and proprieties. Thus the Model for Women says, “T o please one man is her goal; to displease one man ends her goal.” It fol ows from th is that a woman must seek her husband’s love— not through such means as flattery, flirting, or false intimacy, but rather through devotion.…

If a husband be unworthy then he possesses nothing by whi ch to control his wife.

If a wife be unworthy, then she possesses nothing with whic h to serve her husband.

If a husband does not control his wife, then the rules of cond uct manifesting his authority are abandoned and broken. If a wife does not serv e her husband, then the proper relationship (between men and women) and the natu ral order of things are neglected and destroyed. As a matter of fact the purpose of

these two (the
control ing of women by men, and the serving of men by wo
men) is the same.

Now examine the gentlemen of the present age. They only k
now that wives must
be control ed, and that the husband’s rules of conduct manif
esting his authority
must be established. They therefore teach their boys to read
 books and (study)
histories. But they do not in the least understand that husba
nds and masters must
(also) be served, and that the proper relationship and the rit
es should be maintained.

Yet only to teach men and not to teach women,—
is that not ignoring the essential
relation between them? According to the “Rites,” it is the rul
e to begin to teach
children to read at the age of eight years, and by the age of
fifteen years they ought
then to be ready for cultural training. Only why should it not
be (that girls’

education as wel as boys’ be) according to this principle?…
As Yin and Yang are not
of the same nature, so man and woman have different chara
cteristics. The distinctive
quality of the Yang is rigidity; the function of the Yin is yieldi
ng. Man is honored for
strength; a woman is beautiful on account of her gentleness.
 Hence there arose the
common saying: “A man though born like a wolf may, it is fe
ared, become a weak
monstrosity; a woman though born like a mouse may, it is fe
ared, become a tiger.”

Now for self-
culture nothing equals respect for others. To counteract firm ness
nothing equals compliance. Consequently it can be said that the Way of respect and
acquiescence is woman’s most important principle of condu ct. So respect may be
defined as nothing other than holding on to that which is per manent; and
acquiescence nothing other than being liberal and generous . Those who are steadfast
in devotion know that they should stay in their proper place s; those who are liberal
and generous esteem others, and honor and serve (them).

From Nancy Lee Swan, Panchao : Foremost Woman Scholar of China (New York: Century Company, 1932), 82–87.

If husband and wife have the habit of staying together, neve r leaving one another,
and fol owing each other around within the limited space of their own rooms, then
they wil lust after and take liberties with one another. From such action improper
language wil arise between the two. This kind of discussion may lead to
licentiousness. Out of licentiousness wil be born a heart of d isrespect to the
husband. Such a result comes from not knowing that one sh ould stay in one’s proper place.

Furthermore, affairs may be either crooked or straight; word s may be either right

Furthermore, affairs may be either crooked or straight; word s may be either right

or wrong. Straightforwardness cannot but lead to quarreling; crookedness cannot
but lead to accusation. If there are real y accusations and qu arrels, then undoubtedly
there wil be angry affairs. Such a result comes from not est eeming others, and not honoring and serving (them).

(If wives) suppress not contempt for husbands, then it fol ow s (that such wives)
rebuke and scold (their husbands). (If husbands) stop not sh ort of anger, then they
are certain to beat (their wives). The correct relationship bet ween husband and wife
is based upon harmony and intimacy, and (conjugal) love is grounded in proper
union. Should actual blows be dealt, how could matrimonial relationship be
preserved? Should sharp words be spoken, how could (conju gal) love exist? If love
and proper relationship both be destroyed, then husband an d wife are divided.

INDIA: THE RAMAYANA

The fol owing excerpts are from a great Indian epic, the Ram ayana, attributed to an
author named Valmiki. It was written in Sanskrit during the t hird century B.C.E., but a
more definitive version was compiled around 200 C.E. The st ory deals with the turbulent life of a god-
king, Rama, and his wife, Sita. Rama is driven into exile, and his wife insists on accompanying him. Sita is abducted and Rama battles successful y
to win her back. The story provides a host of complex clues about marriage ideals in
India’s version of a patriarchal society. One reference, to an

ordeal by burning,
foreshadows a custom (suttee) introduced in a later period o
f Indian history,
according to which some women were expected to throw th
emselves on their
husbands' funeral pyres, based on the assumption that with
her husband dead, a woman's life was over.

• • •

From Valmiki, The Ramayana, trans. Hari Prasad Shastri (Lon
don, 1957), 1: 221, 227; 3: 103–4, 287–89, 310–16, 334–
38, 341–42.

The sweet-
speaking Sita, worthy of Rama's love, thus being instructed
to remain in
Ayodhya, though fil ed with affection, indignantly replied: "O
Offspring of a great
king, O Rama, how canst thou speak in such wise? O Prince,
thy words evoke
laughter. O Chief of Men, father, mother, son and daughter-
in-law live according to
their merit and are dependent on it, but a wife enjoys the fo
rtune of her husband
since she is a part of himself. I am therefore entitled to shar
e thy father's command and also go into exile.

"The happiness of a woman depends on her husband, neith
er father, mother, son,
relative or companion avail her at death; in this world and in
the other world, the husband alone is her al -in-
al . If thou to-day depart for the forest, I wil precede
thee on foot, clearing the thorns and kusha grass from thy p
ath. O Hero,
relinquishing anger and pride, take me with thee without he

sitation. There is no
fault in me that merits my remaining here, without thee. Th e joy experienced by
lords of men whether dwel ing in a palace or transported in an aerial chariot
through the heavens or possessing the eightfold psychic po wers, is far inferior to the
joy of the wife in the service of her lord. My royal father has instructed me ful y in
the duties of a wife and, therefore, I have no need of further instruction in the
matter. Assuredly I shal accompany thee to the forest, unin habited by men, fil ed
with savage beasts, such as bears and bul s. O My Hero, I wi l dwel in the forest as
happily as in the palace of my father, having no anxiety in t he three worlds save the
service of my spouse. O Hero, I wil wander with thee in the forest according to the
ancient spiritual ordinance, free from desire for pleasure, tra versing the honey-

ancient spiritual ordinance, free from desire for pleasure, tra versing the honey-
scented woodland. O Lord of my Life, since thou canst prote ct and support
innumerable people, canst thou not more easily protect me? Without doubt to-day I
shal enter the forest with thee, O Fortunate Prince, none ca n break my resolve....

Thus Sita, lamenting and embracing... Rama, wept aloud. Fr om her eyes, like a
she elephant wounded by poisoned arrows, long-
restrained tears issued, as fire is
kindled by the friction of wood. Crystal drops fel from her e

yes as water slips from
the petals of the lotus flowers. The face of the princess rese mbling the ful moon,
withered by the fire of intense grief, looked like a lotus withd rawn from water.

Shri Ramachandra, taking Sita, afflicted and fainting, in his a rms, spoke to her in
the fol owing wise: “O goddess I do not desire even to enter heaven if it causes thee
pain! Nought do I fear! Like Brahma [the creator God], I am whol y fearless!

Though able to protect thee in every way, yet not ful y know ing thy mind, I declined
to let thee share my exile. Seeing thou art destined to share my exile, I do not desire
to abandon thee, as a man of virtuous conduct determines n ot to sacrifice his good name….

This is eternal righteousness—
to obey the command of thy parents, fixed in the
practice of truth. O Sita, not knowing thy mind, I advised the e not to accompany
me, but now seeing thy fixed resolve I desire to take thee wi th me…. [During the
exile Sita is seized by a king, Ravana, aided by a demon. Ra ma ultimately defeats Ravana.]

Rama Repudiates Sita

Beholding Sita standing humbly beside him, Rama gave exp ression to the feelings he had concealed in his heart, saying: —

“O Il ustrious Princess, I have re-
won thee and mine enemy has been defeated on

the battlefield; I have accomplished al that fortitude could d o; my wrath is
appeased; the insult and the one who offered it have both b een obliterated by me.

To-day my prowess has been manifested, to-
day mine exertions have been crowned with success, to-
day I have fulfil ed my vow and am free. As ordained by dest iny the
stain of thy separation and thine abduction by that fickle-
minded titan has been
expunged by me, a mortal. Of what use is great strength to the vacil ating, who do
not with resolution avenge the insult offered to them?...

When Sita heard Rama speak in this wise, her large doe-
like eyes fil ed with tears
and, beholding the beloved of his heart standing close to hi m, Rama, who was
apprehensive of public rumour, was torn within himself. The n, in the presence of the
monkeys and the titans, he said to Sita, whose eyes were as large as lotus petals, her
dark hair plaited, and who was endowed with faultless limbs :—

“What a man should do in order to wipe out an insult, I have done by slaying
Ravana for I guard mine honour jealously!... Be happy and l et it be known that this
arduous campaign, so gloriously terminated through the sup port of my friends, was
not undertaken whol y for thy sake. I was careful to wipe out the affront paid to me
completely and to avenge the insult offered to mine il ustrio us House.

“A suspicion has arisen, however, with regard to thy conduct , and thy presence is
as painful to me as a lamp to one whose eye is diseased! He nceforth go where it best
pleaseth thee, I give thee leave, O Daughter of Janaka. O Lo vely One, the ten regions
are at thy disposal; I can have nothing more to do with thee! What man of honour
would give rein to his passion so far as to permit himself to t ake back a woman who
has dwelt in the house of another? Thou hast been taken int o Ravana’s lap and he

has dwelt in the house of another? Thou hast been taken int o Ravana’s lap and he
has cast lustful glances on thee; how can I reclaim thee, I w ho boast of belonging to
an il ustrious House? The end which I sought in re-conquering thee has been gained;
I no longer have any attachment for thee; go where thou de sirest!… Assuredly
Ravana, beholding thy ravishing and celestial beauty, wil no t have respected thy
person during the time that thou didst dwel in his abode.”

On this, that noble lady, worthy of being addressed in sweet words, hearing that
harsh speech from her beloved lord, who for long had surrou nded her with every
homage, wept bitterly, and she resembled a creeper that ha s been torn away by the trunk of a great elephant.

“Why dost thou address such words to me, O Hero, as a com mon man addresses
an ordinary woman? I swear to thee, O Long-armed Warrior, that my conduct is

worthy of thy respect! It is the behavior of other women that has fil ed thee with
distrust! Relinquish thy doubts since I am known to thee! If my limbs came in
contact with another's, it was against my wil , O Lord, and n ot through any
inclination on my part; it was brought about by fate. [Sita en ters a burning pyre to
demonstrate her innocence.] Thereafter the Witness of the whole world, the god of fire, addressed Rama, saying:—

"Here is Vaidehi, O Rama, there is no sin in her! Neither by word, feeling or
glance has thy lovely consort shown herself to be unworthy of thy noble qualities.

Separated from thee, that unfortunate one was borne away against her wil in the
lonely forest by Ravana, who had grown proud on account of his power. Though
imprisoned and closely guarded by titan women in the inner apartments, thou wast
ever the focus of her thoughts and her supreme hope. Surro unded by hideous and
sinister women, though tempted and threatened, Maithili ne ver gave place in her
heart to a single thought for that titan and was solely absor bed in thee. She is pure
and without taint, do thou receive Maithili; it is my comman d that she should not suffer reproach in any way."

These words fil ed Rama's heart with delight and he, the mo st eloquent of men,
that loyal soul, reflected an instant within himself, his glanc e ful of joy. Then the
il ustrious, steadfast and exceedingly valiant Rama, the first

of virtuous men, hearing
those words addressed to him, said to the Chief of the Gods:
—

“On account of the people, it was imperative that Sita shoul
d pass through this
trial by fire; this lovely woman had dwelt in Ravana’s inner a
partments for a long
time. Had I not put the innocence of Janaki to the test, the p
eople would have said:

— ‘Rama, the son of Dasaratha is governed by lust!’ It was
wel known to me that
Sita had never given her heart to another and that [she], wa
s ever devoted to me.…

That virtuous woman could never belong to any other than
myself for she is to me
what the light is to the sun. [A later chapter was added, resp
onding to the belief that
even innocent cohabitation with another man is unacceptabl
e and detailing Rama’s renewed exile of Sita and her death.]

CHAPTER 6

MILITARY ROLES IN CHINA AND ROME

The great empires that culminated in the Han dynasty in Chi
na and the Roman
Empire around the Mediterranean invite comparison in man
y ways. They both ruled
huge territories (not too dissimilar in total size) and populati
ons (about 56 mil ion
people at the height of Han China, about 54 mil ion in the Ro
man Empire). They
created monuments and institutions long remembered, inde
ed long influential, and

they both ultimately declined, though at slightly different ti
mes and with markedly different long-
range outcomes. The Chinese Empire began to form earlier t
han its
Roman counterpart, and it defined elements that persist in C
hina to the present day,
including core geography. The Roman achievement later bec
ame more fragmented.

Both empires, of course, depended greatly on military conqu
est and sustained
military organization. The great Roman legions formed one o
f the most famous and
effective fighting forces in world history, with rigorous traini
ng and comradeship
among the soldiers, under the leadership of powerful genera
ls. Chinese generals
lacked the power of their Roman counterparts, for there was
 more bureaucratic
control. They too stressed discipline, but they also delved m
ore deeply into issues of
strategy and even basic philosophy. Sun-
Tzu, in the fifth century B.C.E. (under the stil -
fragmented Zhou dynasty), wrote one of the great theoretic
al works of al time,
The Art of War, stil widely studied and indeed revived by Ma
o Zedong and used to
promote doctrines of guerril a warfare in the century.

The fol owing documents come from very different stages of
 empire: Sun Tzu was
writing to promote better military organization when Chines
e imperial unity had yet
ful y to form. Vegetius wrote at the end of empire, intending
to advise one of the
later Roman emperors (either Theodosius I or Valentian III) a

nd to correct
contemporary failings in recruitment and training. Vegetius did borrow from earlier
writings, dating back to the Republican period, but his work may certainly have
been colored by the increasing problems Rome was facing w ith the Germanic invasions.

Questions

1. How do Sun-
Tzu and Vegetius approach the subject of military success? Do both
works suggest the reasons China and Rome achieved such great military power in
the classical period? Are the reasons entirely different in the two cases?

2. To what extent do the two works reflect very different stages in the imperial process? Can Sun-
Tzu be interpreted as an author writing before the ful development of empire, and Vegetius as an author writing when the empire is on the defensive?

3. What do the two works imply about the importance of the military in the larger
society, in China and in Rome, respectively?

For Further Discussion

1. Is it valid to suggest that these two documents imply significant differences in the
military role in the Chinese and Roman empires, respectively? What else would
you need to know to deal with this question more ful y?

2. Why has Sun-
Tzu survived as a military treatise worth reading, and no comparable Roman treatise exists?

SUN-TZU, THE ART OF WAR

This is probably one of the two most famous military books ever written. (The other

would be the much more modern work by Clausewitz, writte
n in the 1820s.)

• • •

Strategic Offense

Master Sun said:

In War,

Better take

A State

Intact

Than destroy it From Sun-
Tzu, “Strategic Offensive,” The Art of War, ed. and
trans. John Minford (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 14–
19. Copyright © 2002

by John Minford. Used by permission of Viking Penguin, a div
ision of Penguin Group (USA) Inc.

Better take

An army

A regiment,

A detachment,

A company,

Intact

Than destroy them.

Ultimate excel ence lies

Not in winning

Every battle

But in defeating the enemy

Without ever fighting.

The highest form of warfare

Is to attack

Strategy itself; The next,

To attack

Al iances;

The next,

To attack

Armies

The lowest form of war is

To attack

Cities.

Siege warfare

Is a last resort.

In a siege,

Three months are needed

To assemble

Protective shields,

Armored wagons,

Armored wagons,

And sundry

Siege weapons and equipment;

Another three months

To pile

Earthen ramps.

The general who cannot

Master his anger

Orders his troops out

Like ants,

Sending one in three

To their deaths,

Without taking the city.

This is the calamity

Of siege warfare.

The Skil ful Strategist

Defeats the enemy

Without doing battle,

Captures the city

Without laying siege,

Overthrows the enemy state

Without protracted war.

He strives for supremacy

Under heaven

Intact,

Intact,

His men and weapons

Stil keen,

His gain

Complete.

This is the method of

Strategic attack.

In War,

With forces ten

To the enemy’s one,

Surround him;

With two,

Split in half.

If equal y matched,

Fight it out;

If fewer in number,

Lie low;

If weaker,

Escape.

A smal force

Obstinately fighting

Wil be captured

By a larger force.

The general is the prop

Of the nation.

When the prop is solid,

The nation is strong.

When the prop is flawed,

The nation is weak.

A ruler can bring misfortune

Upon his troops

In three ways:

Ordering them

To advance

Or to retreat

When they should not

Is cal ed

Hobbling the army; Ignorant interference

In military decisions

Confuses

Officers and men; Ignorant meddling

In military appointments

Perplexes

Officers and men.

When an army is confused and perplexed,

The feudal princes

Wil cause trouble; This creates

Chaos in the ranks

And gives away

Victory There are five essentials For victory:

Know when to fight

And when not to fight; Understand how to deploy

Large and smal

Numbers; Have officers and men who

Share a single wil ;

Be ready

For the unexpected; Have a capable general,

Unhampered by his sovereign.

These five

Point the way to

Victory.

Hence the saying

“Know the enemy,

Know yourself,

And victory

Is never in doubt,

Not in a hundred battles.” He who knows self

But not the enemy

But not the enemy

Wil suffer one defeat

For every victory.

He who knows

Neither self

Nor enemy

Wil fail

In every battle

The Making of Plans

The Way

Causes men

To be of one mind

With their rulers,

To live or die with them,

And never to waver....

On which side

Is discipline

More effective?

Which army

Is the stronger?

Whose officers and men

Are better trained?

In which army are rewards and punishments

Clearest?

From these

Can be known

Victory and defeat.

The Way of War is

A Way of Deception

When able,

Feign inability;

When deploying troops,

Appear not to be.

When near,

Appear far;

When far,

Appear near.

Lure with bait;

Strike with chaos.

If the enemy is ful ,

Be prepared.

If strong

Avoid him.

VEGETIUS, EPITOME OF MILITARY SCIENCE

Little is known about Publius Flavius Vegetius Renatus. He w as a Christian and a prominent horse breeder who probably lived either in Spain or in France (Gaul) and served a high position in the Roman imperial bureaucracy. H e also wrote a book on curing diseases in mules.

• • •

(1.3) Whether recruits from the country or from the city are more useful.

The next question is to consider whether a recruit from the c ountry or from the city is more useful. On this subject, I think it could never have be en doubted that the

rural populace is better suited for arms. They are nurtured u
nder the open sky in a
life of work, enduring the sun, careless of shade, unacquaint
ed with bathhouses, ignorant of luxury, simple-
souled, content with a little, with limbs toughened to
endure every kind of toil, and for whom wielding iron, diggin
g a fosse, and carrying
a burden is what they are used to from the country....

(1.6) That the potential y better recruits are recognized at s
election from the face and physical posture.

He who is charged with carrying out the levy procedure sho
uld take great pains to
choose those able to fil the part of soldiers from the face, fr
om the eyes, from the
whole conformation of the limbs. For quality is indicated not
only in men, but even
in horses and dogs, by many points. ... So let the adolescent
 who is to be selected for
material activity have alert eyes, straight neck, broad chest,
 muscular shoulders,
strong arms, long fingers; let him be smal in the stomach, sl
ender in the buttocks,
and have calves and feet that are not swol en by surplus fat,
 but firm with hard
muscle. When you see these points in a recruit, you need no
t greatly regret the
absence of tal stature. It is more useful that soldiers be stro
ng than big.

From N. P. Milner, Vegetius: Epitome of Military Science (2nd
ed., Liverpool, 1996), 4–
13. Used by permission of Liverpool University Press.

(1.8) When recruits should be marked.

The recruit should not be tattooed with the pin-
pricks of the official mark as soon as
he has been selected, but first be thoroughly tested in exercises so that it may be
established whether he is truly fitted for so much effort. Both mobility and strength
are thought to be required of him, and whether he is able to learn the discipline of arms, whether he has the self-confidence of a soldier. For very many, though they
seem not unacceptable in appearance, are yet found unsuitable in training.

Therefore, the less useful ones should be rejected, and in their place the most
energetic should be substituted. For in any conflict it is not so much numbers as
bravery that pays off. So once the recruits have been tattooed, the science of arms
should be shown them in daily training….

(1.9) Recruits should be trained in the military step, in running, and in jumping.

So, at the very start of the training, recruits should be taught the military step. For
nothing should be maintained more on the march or in battle than that al soldiers
should keep ranks as they move. The only way that this can be done is by learning
through constant training to maneuver quickly and evenly. For a divided and
disordered army experiences danger from the enemy which is always most serious.

So at the military step, twenty miles should be covered in five hours, at least in

summer time. At the ful step, which is faster, twenty-four miles should be covered
in the same time. If you add anything to this, it now become s running, for which a
distance cannot be defined. … The soldier should also be tra ined at jumping,

distance cannot be defined. … The soldier should also be tra ined at jumping,
whereby ditches are vaulted, and hurdles of a certain height surmounted, so that
when obstacles of this kind are encountered, he can cross th em without effort.

Furthermore, in actual conflict and clash of arms, the soldier coming on by a
running jump makes the adversary’s eyes flinch, frightens hi s mind, and plants a
blow before the other can properly prepare himself.…

(1.10) Recruits should be trained in the art of swimming Eve ry recruit without
exception should, in the summer months, learn the art of sw imming, for rivers are
not always crossed by bridges, and armies both when advan cing and retreating are
frequently forced to swim. Torrents often tend to flood after sudden fal s of rain or
snow, and ignorance of swimming incurs risk not only from t he enemy but the water
also. Therefore, the ancient Romans, who were trained in th e whole art of warfare
through so many wars and continual crises, selected the Ca mpus Martius next to the
Tiber in which the youth might wash off sweat and dust after training in arms, and

lose their fatigue from running by the exercise of swimming. ...

(1.11) How the ancients trained recruits with wicker shields and with posts.

The ancients, as one finds in books, trained recruits in this manner. They wove shields from withies, of hurdle-like construction, and circular, such that the hurcle had twice the weight that a government shield normal y has. They also gave recruits wooden foils, likewise of double weight, instead of swords. So equipped, they were trained not only in the morning but even after noon against posts. Indeed, the use of posts is of very great benefit to gladiators as wel as soldiers. Neither the arena nor the [practice]-field ever proved a man invincible in armed combat, unless he was judged to have been thoroughly trained at the post. Each recruit would plant a single post in the ground so that it could not move, and protruded six feet. Against the post, as if against an adversary, the recruit trained himself using the foil and hurdle like a sword and shield, so that now he aimed at, as it were, the head and face, now threatened the flanks, then tried to cut the ham-strings and legs, backed off, came on, sprang, and aimed at the post with every method of attack and art of combat, as though it were an actual opponent. In this traning, care was taken that the recruit drew himself up to inflict wounds without exposing any part of himself to a blow.

(1.19) Recruits should be trained in carrying a burden.

Recruits should very frequently be made to carry a burden o f up to sixty pounds, and route-
march at the military step, since on arduous campaigns they have
necessarily to carry their rations together with their ams. Th is should not be thought
hard, once the habit has been gained, for there is nothing th at continual practice
does not render very easy. We know that the ancient soldier s used to do this exercise
from the evidence of Vergil himself, who says: “Just as the b old Roman in his
national arms cruel y laden takes the road, and before the e nemy expects it, stands in formation, having pitched camp.”

CHAPTER 7

BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY

The origin and early development of two of the great world r eligions lie in the
classical period. Both Buddhism and Christianity arose wher e important religious
developments had already occurred, but partial y in protest against established
formulas. Both sought to dispense with what their leaders vi ewed as excessive
ceremonies and religious officialdom, in favor of a focus on s piritual values. Both,
unquestionably, spurred new interest in otherworldly goals.

Buddhism originated in India, with Prince Gautama (563–483 B.C.E.), who later
took the name “Buddha,” or “Enlightened One.” Protesting k

ey features of Hinduism,
including the great role of priests and ritual and the caste sy stem, Buddhism
maintained and extended Hindu disdain for earthly life, looki ng to an ultimate
union with the divine essence, which the new religion cal ed nirvana. Buddha
transmitted his thoughts to disciples oral y, and they were o nly gradual y written
down. From a smal movement concentrated around its holy founder, Buddhism
spread widely in India during the classical period, rivaling bu t also coexisting with
Hinduism. By the end of the classical period, Buddhism was shrinking in India itself,
as Hinduism consolidated its majority hold. But it was gainin g new converts in Sri
Lanka, in other parts of southeastern Asia, and in China.

Christianity originated later, in the other great center of reli gious origins in world
history, the Middle East. Inspired by Jesus Christ, who was cr ucified in 30 C.E.,
Christianity developed quickly as various disciples and early converts spel ed out
their story of Jesus’ life and doctrines and began to form reli gious communities. For
a brief time, Christian leaders emphasized reform within the Jewish religion, but
soon other converts were sought as the religion linked to the wider Greco-Roman
world. By 300 C.E. probably about 10 percent of al the peop le in the empire were
Christian, drawn to the message of hope for the poor and an intel ectual and

spiritual structure that added important elements to existing Greco-Roman culture.

A strong church organization, with religious officials such as priests and bishops,
arose in many regions, paral eling the organization of the e mpire itself.

Christianity and Buddhism shared many features, which hel ps explain their
similar success in converting masses of people in various re gions and of various
cultural backgrounds. They both offered hope for religious a dvancement, mainly
after this life but to a limited extent during it. They both exp ressed suspicion of
worldly things and offered an ethic designed to help religiou s people avoid giving in
to snares and temptations. Both, not surprisingly, sponsored monastic movements
where smal groups of people could seek holiness apart fro m normal worldly cares.

The two religions also differed greatly. Their attitude toward the world and its
doings diverged; a careful comparison might begin by trying to define this
difference. Buddhists emphasized miseries, whereas Christia n leaders such as Paul
stressed sin. How would Christian and Buddhist attitudes to ward government or
human achievement compare? A second difference lies in th e teachings about how
to deal with misery or sin: what is the good religious life, an d how much control
does an individual have over it? Buddhists and Christians dif

fered greatly in their
views on how to lead a holy life and also on the intervention of divine forces. This
difference relates to the strong organizational contrast betw
een the two religions,

difference relates to the strong organizational contrast betw
een the two religions,
with Christianity being far more focused on church institutio
ns as the embodiment of faith.

Questions

1. What aspects of Christianity and Buddhism—whether similar or different—help explain their great appeal?

2. How did Buddhist and Christian leaders define the main goals of life? What are the concepts of nirvana and Christian salvation? How did the two religions view the human body and its needs?

3. How did Buddhist and Christian leaders define divinity? What were the roles of Buddha and of Christ in religious life?

4. In what respects did Buddhist and Christian leaders agree, and in what respects did they disagree, about how to lead a holy life? How would the two religions view the state? How would they view acts of charity in relation to a holy life?

5. Why did Buddhism develop less of a formal church structure than Christianity?

Does the difference relate to differences in the ideals of the two religions? How would the two religions, as they matured, approach problems of truth and error?

What was the Christian approach, by the fourth century, to what it called heresy?

Which religion would be more tolerant, and why?

For Further Discussion

1. How did Buddhism and Christianity reflect the earlier tradi tions of their cultures

—
Hinduism and the Indian epics, for Buddhism; Greek philoso phy and Roman law, for Christianity?

2. How did Buddhism resemble Hinduism? How did it differ?

3. How would Buddhist monasticism compare with Christian, in institutions devoted to the holiest possible life?

4. Why did Christianity and Buddhism both have such wide a ppeal during the late
classical centuries and beyond? How did the spread of both religions relate to the
decline of Classical Chinese and Roman Civilizations?

BUDDHISM

The first Buddhist selection below, entitled “The Four Noble Truths,” lies at the core of Buddha’s quest for understanding after he had renounced worldly things. It suggests a central definition of Buddhist goals. The second passage, which more explicitly explains what an individual should do to live a holy life, comes from the Dhammapada, or Footsteps of the Law. This was probably w ritten down toward the end of the period, when Buddhist doctrines had been ful y e stablished, at about 70

B.C.E. Later Buddhism also reflected some belief in the holin ess of Buddha himself, which had not been part of Gautama’s original vision but wh ich helped spread the religion as people sought to attach their otherworldly aspirat ions to the merits of saintly leaders.

• • •

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

1. The Truth Concerning Misery

And how, O priests, does a priest live, as respects the eleme nts of being, observant of the elements of being in the four noble truths?

Whenever, O priest, a priest knows the truth concerning mis ery, knows the truth concerning the origin of misery, knows the truth concerning the cessation of misery,

knows the truth concerning the path leading to the cessatio
n of misery.

And what, O priests, is the noble truth of misery?

Birth is misery; old age is misery; disease is misery; death is
misery; sorrow,
lamentation, misery, grief, and despair are misery; to wish f
or what one cannot have
is misery; in short, al the five attachment-
groups are misery.

This, O priests, is cal ed the noble truth of misery.

From Henry Clarke Warren, Buddhism in Translations: Passag
es Selected from the
Buddhist Sacred Books and Translated from the Original Pali
into English, Student's
Edition Harvard Oriental Series. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard
University Press, 1953), 365–
74. Copyright © 1953 by the President and Fel ows of Harva
rd Col ege.

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2. The Truth of the Origin of Misery

And what, O priests, is the noble truth of the origin of misery
?

It is desire leading to rebirth, joining itself to pleasure and p
assion, and finding delight in every existence,—
desire, namely, for sensual pleasure, desire for
permanent existence, desire for transitory existence.

But where, O priests, does this desire spring up and grow? w
here does it settle and take root?

Where anything is delightful and agreeable to men, there de sire springs up and grows, there it settles and takes root.

And what is delightful and agreeable to men, where desire s prings up and grows, where it settles and takes root?

The eye is delightful and agreeable to men; there desire spri ngs up and grows, there it settles and takes root.

The ear… the nose… the tongue… the body… the mind is de lightful and
agreeable to men; there desire springs up and grows, there i t settles and takes root.

The Six Organs of Sense.

Forms… sounds… odors… tastes… things tangible… ideas ar e delightful and
agreeable to men; there desire springs up and grows, there i t settles and takes root.

The Six Objects of Sense.

Eye-consciousness … ear-consciousness … nose-consciousness … tongue-consciousness… body-consciousness… mind-consciousness is delightful and agreeable to men; there desire springs up and grows, there i t settles and takes root.…

The Six Sensations.

Perception of forms… sounds… odors… tastes… things tangi ble… ideas is
delightful and agreeable to men; there desire springs up and grows, there it settles and takes root.…

The Six Reasonings.

Reflection on forms… sounds… odors… tastes… things tangi ble… ideas is
delightful and agreeable to men; there desire springs up and grows, there it settles and takes root.

The Six Reflections.

This, O priests, is cal ed the noble truth of the origin of mise ry.

3. The Truth of the Cessation of Misery

And what, O priests, is the noble truth of the cessation of mi sery?

It is the complete fading out and cessation of this desire, a g iving up, a losing
hold, a relinquishment, and a nonadhesion.

But where, O priests, does this desire wane and disappear? where is it broken up and destroyed?

Where anything is delightful and agreeable to men; there de sire wanes and
disappears, there it is broken up and destroyed.

And what is delightful and agreeable to men, where desire w anes and disappears, where it is broken up and destroyed?

The eye is delightful and agreeable to men; there desire wa nes and disappears, there it is broken up and destroyed.…

This, O priests, is cal ed the noble truth of the cessation of misery.

4. The Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Misery
And what, O priests, is the noble truth of the path leading to

the cessation of misery?

It is this noble eightfold path, to wit, right belief, right resolve, right speech, right behavior, right occupation, …, right contemplation, right concentration.

And what, O priests, is right belief?

The knowledge of misery, O priests, the knowledge of the origin of misery, the knowledge of the cessation of misery, and the knowledge of the path leading to the cessation of misery, this, O priests, is called "right belief."

And what, O priests, is right resolve?

The resolve to renounce sensual pleasures, the resolve to have malice towards none, and the resolve to harm no living creature, this, O priests, is called "right resolve."

And what, O priests, is right speech?

To abstain from falsehood, to abstain from backbiting, to abstain from harsh language, and to abstain from frivolous talk, this, O priests, is called "right speech."

And what, O priests, is right behavior?

To abstain from destroying life, to abstain from taking that which is not given one, and to abstain from immorality, this, O priests, is called "right behavior."

And what, O priests, is right occupation?

Whenever, O priests, a noble disciple, quitting a wrong occu
pation, gets his
livelihood by a right occupation, this, O priests, is cal ed “rig
ht occupation.”…

And what, O priests, is right contemplation?

Whenever, O priests, a priest lives, as respects the body, ob
servant of the body,
strenuous, conscious, contemplative, and has rid himself of l
ust and grief; as respects
sensations, observant of sensations, strenuous, conscious, c
ontemplative, and has rid
himself of lust and grief; as respects the mind, observant of
the mind, strenuous,
conscious, contemplative, and has rid himself of lust and gri
ef; as respects the
elements of being, observant of the elements of being, stren
uous, conscious,

elements of being, observant of the elements of being, stren
uous, conscious,
contemplative, and has rid himself of lust and grief, this, O p
riests, is cal ed “right contemplation.”

And what, O priests, is right concentration?

Whenever, O priests, a priest, having isolated himself from s
ensual pleasures,
having isolated himself from demeritorious traits, and stil e
xercising reasoning, stil
exercising reflection, enters upon the first trance which is pr
oduced by isolation and
characterized by joy and happiness; when, through the subs
idence of reasoning and
reflection, and stil retaining joy and happiness, he enters up

on the second trance,
which is an interior tranquilization and intentness of the tho ughts, and is produced
by concentration; when, through the paling of joy, indifferen t, contemplative,
conscious, and in the experience of bodily happiness—
that state which eminent men
describe when they say, “Indifferent, contemplative, and livi ng happily”—he enters
upon the third trance; when, through the abandonment of h appiness, through the
abandonment of misery, through the disappearance of al a ntecedent gladness and
grief, he enters upon the fourth trance, which has neither mi sery nor happiness, but
is contemplation as refined by indifference, this, O priests, is cal ed “right concentration.”

This, O priests, is cal ed the noble truth of the path leading t o the cessation of misery.

THE WAY, FROM THE DHAMMAPADA

The best of ways is the eightfold; the best of truths the four words; the best of
virtues passionlessness; the best of men he who has eyes to see.

This is the way, there is no other that leads to the purifying of intel igence. Go on
this path! This is the confusion of Mâra, the tempter.

If you go on this way, you wil make an end of pain! The way preached by me,
when I had understood the removal of the thorns in the flesh .

You yourself must make an effort. The Tathâgatas (Buddhas) are only preachers.

The thoughtful who enter the way are freed from the bondage of Mâra.

“All created things perish,” he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way to purity.

“All created things are grief and pain,” he who knows and sees this becomes
passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity.

“All forms are unreal,” he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity.

He who does not rouse himself when it is time to rise, who, though young and
strong, is full of sloth, whose will and thought are weak, that lazy and idle man never finds the way to knowledge.

Watching his speech, well restrained in mind, let a man never commit any wrong
with his body! Let a man but keep these three roads of action clear, and he will
achieve the way which is taught by the wise.

Through zeal knowledge is gained, through lack of zeal knowledge is lost; let a
man who knows this double path of gain and loss thus place himself that knowledge may grow.

From The Sacred Books of the East, trans. Epiphanus Wilson (New York: Colonial Press, 1900), 138–39.

Cut down the whole forest of desires, not a tree only! Danger comes out of the

forest of desires. When you have cut down both the forest of desires and its
undergrowth, then… you wil be rid of the forest and of desir es!

So long as the desire of man towards women, even the smal est, is not destroyed,
so long is his mind in bondage, as the calf that drinks milk is to its mother.

Cut out the love of self, like an autumn lotus, with thy hand! Cherish the road of
peace. Nirvâna has been shown by Sugata (Buddha).

“Here I shal dwel in the rain, here in winter and summer,” t hus the fool meditates, and does not think of death.

Death comes and carries off that man, honored for his childr en and flocks, his
mind distracted, as a flood carries off a sleeping vil age.

Sons are no help, nor a father, nor relations; there is no help from kinsfolk for one whom death has seized.

A wise and wel -
behaved man who knows the meaning of this should quickly clear the way that leads to Nirvâna.

CHRISTIANITY

The two Christian passages below come from different stages of the religion's development. Paul's Letter to the Romans was written at the height of his career as Christian missionary and formulator of doctrine, between 54 and 58 C.E. It became part of the New Testament of the Christian Bible. The letter reflects an effort to appeal to all peoples with the message of Christian truth, Christ's redemption from sin, and potential salvation. The second document was written by a monk, Vincent of Lerins, in 434, as Christianity became established and began to deal systematically with quarrels over doctrine. Vincent grappled with the problem of knowing religious truth from falsehood, in a work that became known as the Vincentian Canon. His approach obviously reflected the role the institutional church had gained in defining Christian beliefs.

• • •

LETTER FROM PAUL TO THE ROMANS

So sin must no longer reign in your mortal body, exacting obedience to the body's desires. You must no longer put its several parts at sin's disposal, as implements for doing wrong. No: put yourselves at the disposal of God, as dead men raised to life; yield your bodies to him as implements for doing right; for si

n shal no longer be
your master, because you are no longer under law, but unde
r the grace of God.

From The New English Bible (New York: Cambridge Universit
y Press, 1922), 182–85, 189–
91. Copyright © Oxford University Press and Cambridge Uni
versity Press 1961,
1970. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

What then? Are we to sin, because we are not under law but
 under grace? Of
course not. You know wel enough that if you put yourselves
at the disposal of a
master, to obey him, you are slaves of the master whom yo
u obey; and this is true
whether you serve sin, with death as its result; or obedience
, with righteousness as
its result. But God be thanked, you, who once were slaves of
 sin, have yielded
wholehearted obedience to the pattern of teaching to which
you were made subject,
and, emancipated from sin, have become slaves of righteou
sness (to use words that suit your human weakness)—
I mean, as you once yielded your bodies to the service

suit your human weakness)—
I mean, as you once yielded your bodies to the service
of impurity and lawlessness, making for moral anarchy, so n
ow you must yield them
to the service of righteousness, making for a holy life.

When you were slaves of sin, you were free from the control
of righteousness; and
what was the gain? Nothing but what now makes you asham
ed, for the end of that

is death. But now, freed from the commands of sin, and bou
nd to the service of God,
your gains are such as make for holiness, and the end is ete
rnal life. For sin pays a
wage, and the wage is death, but God gives freely, and his g
ift is eternal life, in union with Christ Jesus our Lord.

You cannot be unaware, my friends—
I am speaking to those who have some knowledge of law—
that a person is subject to the law so long as he is alive, and
 no
longer. … So you, my friends, have died to the law by beco
ming identified with the
body of Christ, and accordingly you have found another hus
band in him who rose
from the dead, so that we may bear fruit for God. While we li
ved on the level of our
lower nature, the sinful passions evoked by the law worked i
n our bodies, to bear
fruit for death. But now, having died to that which held us b
ound, we are discharged
from the law, to serve God in a new way, the way of the spir
it, in contrast to the old way, the way of a written code.

What fol ows? Is the law identical with sin? Of course not. Bu
t except through
law I should never have become acquainted with sin. For ex
ample, I should never
have known what it was to covet, if the law had not said, ‘Th
ou shalt not covet.’

Through that commandment sin found its opportunity, and p
roduced in me al kinds
of wrong desires. In the absence of law, sin is a dead thing.
There was a time when,
in the absence of law, I was ful y alive; but when the comma

ndment came, sin
sprang to life and I died. The commandment which should h ave led to life proved in
my experience to lead to death, because sin found its oppor tunity in the
commandment, seduced me, and through the commandme nt kil ed me.

Therefore the law is in itself holy, and the commandment is holy and just and
good. Are we to say then that this good thing was the death of me? By no means. It
was sin that kil ed me, and thereby sin exposed its true char acter: it used a good
thing to bring about my death, and so, through the comman dment, sin became more sinful than ever.

We know that the law is spiritual; but I am not: I am unspirit ual, the purchased
slave of sin. I do not even acknowledge my own actions as mine, for what I do is not
what I want to do, but what I detest. But if what I do is again st my wil , it means
that I agree with the law and hold it to be admirable. But as things are, it is no
longer I who perform the action, but sin that lodges in me. F or I know that nothing good lodges in me—
in my unspiritual nature, I mean—for though the wil to do good is there, the deed is not. The good which I want to do, I fail to do; but what I
do is the wrong which is against my wil ; and if what I do is a gainst my wil , clearly
it is no longer I who am the agent, but sin that has its lodgin g in me.

I discover this principle, then: that when I want to do the rig
ht, only the wrong is
within my reach. In my inmost self I delight in the law of God
, but I perceive that
there is in my bodily members a different law, fighting again
st the law that my
reason approves and making me a prisoner under the law th
at is in my members, the
law of sin. Miserable creature that I am, who is there to resc
ue me out of this body
doomed to death? God alone, through Jesus Christ our Lord!
Thanks be to God! In a
word then, I myself, subject to God's law as a rational being,
 am yet, in my unspiritual nature, a slave to the law of sin.

The conclusion of the matter is this: there is no condemnati
on for those who are

The conclusion of the matter is this: there is no condemnati
on for those who are
united with Christ Jesus, because in Christ Jesus the life-
giving law of the Spirit has
set you free from the law of sin and death. What the law cou
ld never do, because
our lower nature robbed it of al potency, God has done: by
sending his own Son in
a form like that of our own sinful nature, and as a sacrifice f
or sin, he has passed
judgement against sin within that very nature, so that the c
ommandment of the law
may find fulfilment in us, whose conduct, no longer under th
e control of our lower nature, is directed by the Spirit.

Those who live on the level of our lower nature have their o
utlook formed by it,
and that spel s death; but those who live on the level of the

spirit have the spiritual
outlook, and that is life and peace. For the outlook of the lo wer nature is enmity
with God; it is not subject to the law of God; indeed it cannot be: those who live on
such a level cannot possibly please God.

But that is not how you live. You are on the spiritual level, if only God's Spirit
dwel s within you; and if a man does not possess the Spirit o f Christ, he is no
Christian. But if Christ is dwel ing within you, then although t he body is a dead
thing because you sinned, yet the spirit is life itself because you have been justified.

Moreover, if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwel s within you,
then the God who raised Christ Jesus from the dead wil also give new life to your
mortal bodies through his indwel ing Spirit.

It fol ows, my friends, that our lower nature has no claim up on us; we are not
obliged to live on that level. If you do so, you must die. But i f by the Spirit you put
to death al the base pursuits of the body, then you wil live.

For al who are moved by the Spirit of God are sons of God. The Spirit you have
received is not a spirit of slavery leading you back into a life of fear, but a Spirit
that makes us sons, enabling us to cry 'Abba! Father!' In tha t cry the Spirit of God
joins with our spirit in testifying that we are God's children; and if children, then

heirs. We are God’s heirs and Christ’s fel ow-
heirs, if we share his sufferings now in
order to share his splendour hereafter.

For I reckon that the sufferings we now endure bear no com parison with the
splendour, as yet unrevealed, which is in store for us.…

Therefore, my brothers, I implore you by God’s mercy to offe r your very selves to
him: a living sacrifice, dedicated and fit for his acceptance, t he worship offered by
mind and heart. Adapt yourselves no longer to the pattern o f this present world, but
let your minds be remade and your whole nature thus transf ormed. Then you wil be
able to discern the wil of God, and to know what is good, ac ceptable, and perfect.…

The gifts we possess differ as they are al otted to us by God’ s grace, and must be
exercised accordingly: the gift of inspired utterance, for exa mple, in proportion to a
man’s faith; or the gift of administration, in administration. A teacher should
employ his gift in teaching, and one who has the gift of stirri ng speech should use it
to stir his hearers. If you give to charity, give with al your h eart; if you are a leader,
exert yourself to lead; if you are helping others in distress, d o it cheerful y.…

Never pay back evil for evil. Let your aims be such as al me n count honourable.

If possible, so far as it lies with you, live at peace with al me
n. My dear friends, do
not seek revenge, but leave a place for divine retribution; fo
r there is a text which
reads, ‘Justice is mine, says the Lord, I wil repay.’ But there i
s another text: ‘If your
enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink;
by doing this you wil
heap live coals on his head.’ Do not let evil conquer you, but
use good to defeat evil.

Every person must submit to the supreme authorities. There
is no authority but by

Every person must submit to the supreme authorities. There
is no authority but by
act of God, and the existing authorities are instituted by him
; consequently anyone
who rebels against authority is resisting a divine institution,
and those who so resist
have themselves to thank for the punishment they wil recei
ve. For government, a
terror to crime, has no terrors for good behaviour. You wish t
o have no fear of the
authorities? Then continue to do right and you wil have thei
r approval, for they are
God’s agents working for your good. But if you are doing wr
ong, then you wil have
cause to fear them; it is not for nothing that they hold the p
ower of the sword, for
they are God’s agents of punishment, for retribution on the
offender. That is why
you are obliged to submit. It is an obligation imposed not m
erely by fear of
retribution but by conscience. That is also why you pay taxe
s. The authorities are in

God’s service and to these duties they devote their energies .

Discharge your obligations to al men; pay tax and tol , reve rence and respect, to
those to whom they are due. Leave no claim outstanding ag ainst you, except that of
mutual love. He who loves his neighbour has satisfied every claim of the law. For
the commandments, ‘Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kil , thou shalt
not steal, thou shalt not covet’, and any other commandme nt there may be, are al
summed up in the one rule, ‘Love your neighbour as yoursel f.’ Love cannot wrong a
neighbour; therefore the whole law is summed up in love….

VINCENT OF LERINS

I have therefore continual y given the greatest pains and dili gence to enquiring, from
the greatest possible number of men outstanding in holiness and in doctrine, how I
can secure a kind of fixed and, as it were, general and guidi ng principle for
distinguishing the true Catholic Faith from the degraded fals ehoods of heresy. And
the answer that I receive is always to this effect; that if I wis h, or indeed if any one
wishes, to detect the deceits of heretics that arise and to av oid their snares and to
keep healthy and sound in a healthy faith, we ought, with th e Lord’s help, to fortify
our faith in a twofold manner, firstly, that is, by the authorit y of God’s Law, then by the tradition of the Catholic Church.

(2) Here, it may be, some one wil ask, Since the canon of Scripture is complete,
and is in itself abundantly sufficient, what need is there to join to it the
interpretation of the Church? The answer is that because of the very depth of
Scripture al men do not place one identical interpretation upon it. The statements
of the same writer are explained by different men in different ways, so much so that
it seems almost possible to extract from it as many opinions as there are men....

... Therefore, because of the intricacies of error, which is so multiform, there is
great need for the laying down of a rule for the exposition of Prophets and Apostles
in accordance with the standard of the interpretation of the Church Catholic.

(3) Now in the Catholic Church itself we take the greatest care to hold THAT WHICH

HAS BEEN BELIEVED EVERYWHERE, ALWAYS, AND BY ALL.

That is truly and properly 'Catholic,' as is shown by the very force and meaning of
the word, which comprehends everything almost universal y. We shal hold to this
rule if we fol ow universality [i.e. œcumenicity], antiquity, and consent. We shal
fol ow universality if we acknowledge that one Faith to be true which the whole
Church throughout the world confesses; antiquity, if we in no wise depart from those
interpretations which it is clear that our ancestors and fathe

rs proclaimed; consent,
if in antiquity itself we keep fol owing the definitions and opi nions of al , or certainly nearly al , bishops and doctors alike.

From Henry Bettenson, ed., D ocuments of the Christian Chu rch (2d ed., New York:

From Henry Bettenson, ed., D ocuments of the Christian Chu rch (2d ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), 83–84. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

PART II

The Postclassical Period, 450–1450

A MAJOR PHASE OF world history opened with the decline or col apse of the great
empires of Rome, Han China, and Gupta India by the fifth an d sixth centuries C.E.

New forces were set in motion that persisted until the thirte enth century, fol owed by a two-
century transition lasting until about 1450.

During the classical period, the key developments in world h istory had been the
construction of large regional civilizations and their integrati on. This theme did not
disappear. Chinese history, for example, resumed many of it s earlier patterns after
three centuries of real confusion. Indian civilization retained its basic integrity also,
though without the capacity to generate large, internal y dir ected empires. The
Mediterranean was hopelessly divided, however, with Greco-Roman traditions
persisting only in the Byzantine Empire in the northeastern c

orner of the region. This
empire combined the use of the Greek language and culture with Roman imperial
institutions, Orthodox Christianity, and a lively trade. But ov eral , the formation of
empires loomed less large in this new period; other, looser p olitical structures were emphasized.

Several new trends emerged. First, major world religions, de fined in terms of their
ability to convert peoples in various civilization areas, began to gain a greater hold.

The col apse of the classical empires prompted many people to turn to more
otherworldly goals; in some cases, such as Western Europe, the new religions also
provided the clearest shared beliefs and even institutional st ructures. Buddhism was
not new, but during this period it spread far more widely in e astern and
southeastern Asia. Christianity had already gained strength i n the Mediterranean and
in a few parts of the Middle East and sub-
Saharan Africa. Now it spread vigorously
northward, in two main strands (Catholic and Orthodox), ulti mately reaching
Scandinavia in the west and Russia in the east. The third reli gion was new and by far
the most dynamic of al . Islam arose in the Middle East early in the seventh century.

It spread rapidly with Arab conquests in the Middle East and North Africa, where a
new government, the Caliphate, control ed vast territories. I slam also soon won

massive conversions in Central Asia, India (as a minority religion), parts of sub-Saharan Africa, Spain, and Southeast Asia.

The sheer spread of civilization was the second major development of the postclassical period, in some cases related to the impact of Arab influence or the consequences of the various missionary religions. Although the most sophisticated cities and trade still were in the Middle East and North Africa, the Byzantine Empire, India, and China, civilization also developed in additional parts of sub-Saharan Africa (particularly a series of great kingdoms in present-day West Africa, known as the Sudanic kingdoms); in Western Europe, under the influence of Catholic Christianity; in Japan; in Southeast Asia; and in Russia and Eastern Europe. These new civilization areas traded with the leading centers and were able to imitate important aspects of culture (often including writing itself) and some political forms. Finally, though quite separately, larger civilization zones spread in Central America, culminating in the great Aztec Empire, and in the Andes region, with the Inca Empire taking shape toward the end of the postclassical period.

By 1000 C.E. the major societies of Afro-Eurasia were in regular contact. Here was the third main theme of the postclassical centuries. Trade levels, cultural exchanges,

and some military clashes created a new regional network. I nventions developed in

and some military clashes created a new regional network. I nventions developed in
one center, such as China’s introduction of paper, began to spread more rapidly to
other areas. Not only religious ideas but also some artistic fo rms began to affect
numerous different civilizations. Heightened international co ntact also sped the
dissemination of diseases, for example, the great bubonic pl ague (Black Death) of
the fourteenth century, which began in China and within dec ades reached both the
Arab world and Europe, with deadly effects. An increasingly i mportant component
of world history involves understanding the different reactio ns by the major
civilizations to their wider contacts. Muslim traders organize d the interregional
network during much of the period, but Mongol conquests a nd, briefly, Chinese
initiative played major roles in the final postclassical centuri es.

Two kinds of comparison focus attention on the major devel opments of the
postclassical period: comparison of separate patterns and c omparison of reactions to common forces.

First, the distinct characteristics of individual civilizations co ntinue to command
attention. Particular world religions provided new contrasts among regions. Thus,
the impacts of religion on government forms created some c

ommon themes but also
some new differentiation between the Middle East and Chris tian Europe. Conditions
of women were affected by the different cultures of Islam an d the major strands of
Christianity, whereas China, less affected by new cultural inf luences, displayed more
continuity. Comparison is vital to determine the characteristi cs of the new
civilization centers and their relationship to the older civiliza tions.

The second type of comparison is possible because of the in tensification of
interactions among civilizations in Asia, Africa, and Europe. Stil distinctive, many
civilizations had to respond to common influences and event s. Increasing interaction
thus organizes a new set of comparative issues, which had n ot existed in the
previous world history periods: comparison around a commo n development or
contact. Europeans and Muslims encountered each other in Christian crusades to
conquer the Holy Land. These conflicts provided important n ew influences on
Europe but also al ow analysis of differences and hostilities between the two
societies that were sharpened by contact. Merchant activity increased in the
postclassical centuries, through both internal and external tr ade. Despite new
commercial contacts, different societies maintained differen t ideas about merchants
and their contributions. Near the end of the period, the Mon gol conquests in China,

Russia, and elsewhere created new channels of international exchange—but again, reactions to this episode varied, showing how civilizations could change as a result of common impacts but retain their distinctive patterns.

CHAPTER 8

RELIGION AND STATE IN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

Relationship with secular government is a problem for any religion and its leaders (and vice versa). Governments normally concentrate at least in part on issues of war and earthly justice, and perhaps some economic issues such as provisioning cities or helping the poor. What connection do these functions and the people responsible for them have with the purposes of life as defined by religion? What if a government does not attend properly to religion or even is hostile to it? Or, from a government standpoint, what if religious officials seem to be falling down on the job or interfering with obviously secular concerns? The Chinese government ultimately turned against Buddhism in the ninth century, because it felt it must protect the primacy of loyalties to the state. Issues of this sort were different from leading political ideals in the classical period, when except in India religion was less prominent. One change was clear: no Christian or Muslim ruler could claim he was god, unlike some Romans and as opposed to the Chinese Son of Heaven concept.

Early on Christian leaders had faced the issue of what to do about the state. As he tried to spread the new religion to a wide audience, Paul stressed the importance of obeying government authorities even though the chief interests of the good Christian centered on divine power (see chapter 6). As the Christian church developed in Western Europe, with officials and institutions independent of the state, questions of mutual relations became more pressing. The adoption of Christianity by the Roman Empire, and then later by governments in Western Europe, complicated the issue still further: Christian political leaders thought they had a religious role to play (and might want to use religion to bolster their power); church leaders might welcome political support but would often fear secular control.

The rapid rise of Islam, following Muhammad's formulation of the religion early in the seventh century, raised broadly similar concerns. Here was another religion devoted to the power and glory of God; purely political purposes would pale by comparison. Yet, even more than Christianity, Islam developed a highly legalistic impulse. The Koran, which Muhammad presented as the word of Allah, contained a host of rules for family and business behavior. Further religious codes developed, particularly in the Hadith. But if religion regulated so many aspects of human affairs, was there a separate place for government? The situation was further

complicated by the fact that although Islam had religious officials—including scholars who interpreted Muslim law—there was no institutional church of the sort that developed in Western Europe, with a clear leadership hierarchy. And Muhammad, like Paul, had explicitly urged the faithful to obey even a bad ruler—

religious people should not be distracted by political concerns.

The following passages present some of the Christian and Muslim views as they took shape in the postclassical period, and suggest on balance that they are different.

The differences reflected variations in the two religions, but they also had huge implications concerning the power of the state—at the time and subsequently.

Questions

1. What were the main differences in the ways Christian and Muslim thinkers defined the state in its relationship to religion? What state functions would both religions agree on? How does the existence of a separate church differentiate the Christian

agree on? How does the existence of a separate church differentiate the Christian from the Muslim approach?

2. Might Muslims disagree about the state's relation to religion in ways at all similar to the postclassical Christian debate? Did Islam impose any limits on a good ruler?

3. What would a Muslim think of the Christian debate about papal versus imperial power?

4. In the final analysis, are there major differences between Christian and Muslim definitions of a good ruler? Do the religions differ in their beliefs about what to do if a ruler is bad?

For Further Discussion

1. Why did both Christian and Muslim leaders urge obedience to the state in almost all circumstances?

2. Which approach, the Christian or the Muslim, would produce more responsible government?

3. Are differences between Christian and Muslim political traditions—complex as both traditions were—still visible in the world today? Do you agree that Christian

ideas help explain a limited state concept in the West? What state concept most logical y fol ows from Muslim ideals?

A MUSLIM VIEW: NIZAM AL-MULK

Nizam al-Mulk was a Persian bureaucrat who served sultans for the Se ljuk Turks for thirty years during the eleventh century, at a time when the Seljuks control ed much of the Middle East (it was the Seljuks who a bit later oppose d the Christians in the Crusades). This treatise in some ways resembles a host of w orks throughout history that were designed to please kings. King-pleaser treatises flattered rulers by tel ing them how to get and keep power and general y insisting on their importance to their people. But this was a Muslim statement, and religion is ver y much present in the kinds of responsibilities and restraints Nizam al-Mulk insists upon in the name of God. The document refers to the title caliph, taken by the pr ophet Muhammad's Arab successors, who claimed wide religious powers and dut ies. It frequently invokes the holy book the Quran (Koran).

• • •

1. In every age and time God (be He exalted) chooses one member of the human race and, having adorned and endowed him with kingly virtu es, entrusts him with the interests of the world and the wel - being of His servants; He charges that person to close the doors of corruption, confusion and discord, and He imparts to him such

dignity and majesty in the eyes and hearts of men, that und
er his just rule they may
live their lives in constant security and ever wish for his reig
n to continue.

2. Whenever—Al ah be our refuge!—
there occurs any disobedience or disregard of
divine laws on the part of His servants, or any failure in devo
tion and attention to
the commands of The Truth (be He exalted), and He wishes t
o chasten them and
make them taste the retribution for their deeds—
may God not deal us such a fate,
and keep us far from such a calamity!—
verily the wrath of The Truth overtakes
those people and He forsakes them for the vileness of their
disobedience; anarchy
rears its head in their midst, opposing swords are drawn, [an
d] blood is shed....

3. Then by divine decree one human being acquires some pr
osperity and power,
and according to his deserts The Truth bestows good fortune
upon him and gives
him wit and wisdom, wherewith he may employ his subordin
ates every one

him wit and wisdom, wherewith he may employ his subordin
ates every one
according to his merits and confer upon each a dignity and
a station proportionate
to his powers. He selects ministers and their functionaries fr
om among the people,
and giving a rank and post to each, he relies upon them for t
he efficient conduct of
affairs spiritual and temporal. If his subjects tread the path o

f obedience and busy
themselves with their tasks he wil keep them untroubled by
 hardships, so that they
may pass their time at ease in the shadow of his justice. If o
ne of his officers or
ministers commits any impropriety or oppression, he wil onl
y keep him at his post
provided that he responds to correction, advice or punishme
nt, and wakes up from
the sleep of negligence; if he fails to mend his ways, he wil
retain him no longer,
but change him for someone who is deserving; and when his
 subjects are ungrateful
for benefits and do not appreciate security and ease, but po
nder treachery in their
hearts, shewing unruliness and overstepping their bounds, h
e wil admonish them for
their misdeeds, and punish them in proportion to their crime
s. Having done that he
wil cover their sins with the skirt of pardon and oblivion. Fur
ther he wil bring to
pass that which concerns the advance of civilization, such a
s constructing
underground channels, digging main canals, building bridge
s across great waters,
rehabilitating vil ages and farms, raising fortifications, buildi
ng new towns, and
erecting lofty buildings and magnificent dwel ings; he wil ha
ve inns built on the
highways and schools for those who seek knowledge; for wh
ich things he wil be
renowned for ever; he wil gather the fruit of his good works
in the next world and
blessings wil be showered upon him....

From Nizam al-
Mulk, The Book of Government on Rules for Kings, trans. Hu
bert Darke (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960), 9–
13, 62–65. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

4…. [God] furnished [the King] with powers and merits such as had been lacking
in the princes of the world before him, and endowed him wit h al that is needful for a king—
such as a comely appearance, a kindly disposition, integrity, manliness,
bravery, horsemanship, knowledge, [skil in] the use of vario us kinds of arms and
accomplishment in several arts, pity and mercy upon the cr eatures of God,

[strictness in] the performance of vows and promises, sound faith and true belief,
devotion to the worship of God and the practice of such virt uous deeds as praying in
the night, supererogatory fasting, respect for religious autho rities, honouring devout
and pious men, winning the society of men of learning and wisdom, giving regular
alms, doing good to the poor, being kind to subordinates an d servants, and relieving
the people of oppressors. Fol owing al this God gave him po wer and dominion as
befitted his worthiness and good faith, and made al the wor ld subject to him,
causing his dignity and authority to reach al climes; al the dwel ers on earth are his
tributaries, and as long as they seek his favour they are prot ected by his sword….

On Recognizing the Extent of God’s Grace towards Kings
3. It has come down in a tradition from The Prophet (may Al ah bless him and
save him) that on the day of the resurrection, when anyone i s brought forward who

[in his life] wielded power and command over God’s creatur es, his hands wil be
bound; if he has been just, his justice wil loose his hands an d send him to paradise;
but if he has been unjust, his injustice wil cast him into hel as he is, with his hands bound in chains.

4. There is also a tradition that on resurrection day whoever had any command in
this world over God’s creatures, even over the inhabitants of his own house or over
his own underlings, wil be questioned about it; likewise the shepherd who tended
his sheep wil be required to answer for that too.

5. They say that at the time of his father’s leaving this world [caliph] ‘Abd Al ah
ibn ‘Umar ibn al Khattab (may Al ah be pleased with them b oth) asked, ‘O father,
where and when shal I see you again?’ ‘Umar said, ‘In the n ext world.’ ‘Abd Al ah
said, ‘I would it were sooner.’ He said, ‘You wil see me in a d ream tonight,
tomorrow night, or the next night.’ Twelve years passed by without his appearing in
a dream. Then one night he saw him in a dream and said, ‘O father, did you not say
that within three nights I should see you?’ He said, ‘O son, I was occupied, because
in the country around Baghdad a bridge had become dilapid

ated and officials had
not attended to repairing it. One day a sheep’s forefoot fel i nto a hole on that
bridge and was broken. Til now I have been answering for t hat.’

6. Of a certainty The Master of the World (may Al ah perpetu ate his reign) should
know that on that great day he wil be asked to answer for a l those of God’s
creatures who are under his command, and if he tries to tra nsfer [his responsibility]

to someone else he wil not be listened to. Since this is so it behoves the king not to
leave this important matter to anyone else, and not to disre gard the state of God’s
creatures. To the best of his ability let him ever acquaint him self, secretly and
openly, with their conditions; let him protect them from exto rtionate hands, and
preserve them from cruel tyrants, so that the blessings resul ting from those actions
may come about in the time of his rule, if Al ah wil s….

1. It is incumbent upon the king to enquire into religious mat ters, to be
acquainted with the divine precepts and prohibitions and pu t them into practice,
and to obey the commands of God (be He exalted); it is his duty to respect doctors
of religion and pay their salaries out of the treasury, and he should honour pious
and abstemious men. Furthermore it is fitting that once or t wice a week he should
invite religious elders to his presence and hear from them th

e commands of The
Truth; he should listen to interpretations of the Quran and tr
aditions of The Prophet
(may Al ah pray for him and give him peace); and he should
hear stories about just
kings and tales of the prophets (upon them be peace). Durin
g that time he should
free his mind from worldly cares and give his ears and atten
tion [whol y] to them.

Let him bid them take sides and hold a debate, and let him
ask questions about what
he does not understand; when he has learnt the answers let
him commit them to
memory. After this has gone on for some time it wil become
 a habit, and it wil not
be long before he has learnt and memorized most of the pre
cepts of divine law, the
meanings of the Quran and the traditions of The Prophet (up
on him be peace). Then
the way of prudence and rectitude in both spiritual and tem
poral affairs wil be
open to him; no heretic or innovator wil be able to turn him
from that path. His
judgment wil be strengthened and he wil increase in justice
 and equity; vanity and
heresy wil vanish from his kingdom and great works wil spr
ing from his hands. The
roots of wickedness, corruption and discord wil be cut out in
 the time of his empire.

The hand of the righteous shal become strong and the wick
ed shal be no more. In
this world he shal have fame, and in the next world he shal
 find salvation, high

degree and inestimable reward. In his age men wil more th an ever delight in gaining knowledge.…

3. The most important thing which a king needs is sound fait h, because kingship
and religion are like two brothers; whenever disturbance bre aks out in the country religion suffers too; heretics and evil-doers appear; and whenever religious affairs
are in disorder, there is confusion in the country; evil-doers gain power and render
the king impotent and despondent; heresy grows rife and re bels make themselves felt.…

The Story of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al ‘Aziz and the Famine
10. They say that in the days of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al ‘Aziz (Al a h’s mercy be upon
him) there was a famine and the people were in distress. A party of Arabs
approached him and complained saying, ‘O Commander of t he Faithful, we have
consumed our own flesh and blood in the famine (that is, we have become thin),
and our cheeks have turned yel ow because we have not en ough to eat. We need
what is in your treasury; and as for that treasure, it belongs either to you or to God
or to the servants of God. If it belongs to God’s servants it is ours; if it belongs to
God, He has no need of it; if it is yours, then [as the Quran 1 2. 88 says] “be
charitable unto us, for Al ah wil requite the charitable”…; an d if it is ours let us
have it that we may escape from these straits, for the skin is withered on our bodies.’

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al ‘Aziz was moved to sympathy for them, an d tears came into his
eyes; he said, ‘I wil do as you have said,’ and in the same h our he gave orders for
their requests to be attended to and their wants to be suppli ed. When they were
about to get up and go, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al ‘Aziz (Al ah’s merc y be upon him) said,

‘O men where are you going? As you presented your case a nd that of the rest of
God’s servants to me, so do you present my case to God’ (m eaning: remember me in
your prayers). Then those Arab tribesmen lifted their eyes to heaven and said, ‘O

Lord, by Thy glory [we pray] that Thou wilt do unto ‘Umar ib n ‘Abd al ‘Aziz as he did unto Thy servants.’

11. When they had done praying, immediately a cloud came up and it began to
rain heavily; a hailstone fel upon the bricks of ‘Umar’s palac e; it broke in two and a
piece of paper fel from inside it. They looked at it and there was written upon it [in
Arabic], ‘This is a grace from Al ah The Mighty to ‘Umar ibn ‘ Abd al ‘Aziz

[exempting him] from the fire.’

A CHRISTIAN DEBATE: CANON LAWYERS IN THE TWELFTH CE NTURY

The growth of state power, including the claims of the empe ror of Germany, raised new church-
state issues in Europe by the eleventh and twelfth centuries. A famous

controversy in the eleventh century had pitted Pope Gregory VII against
From Brian Tierney, The Crisis of Church and State, 1050–1300 (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hal , 1964), 122–26.

the emperor Henry IV over the issue of whether secular rulers had any right to
appoint bishops. Gregory insisted on the supremacy of the church in religious
matters and, by absolving Germans of religious obligations to obey their ruler, got
the emperor to back down. The following debate, from the end of the twelfth
century, is between two eminent jurists. Church (canon) law was becoming more
elaborate, and the revival of Roman law provided different arguments about the
state. In this debate Huguccio favors the emperor's side. Alanus uses interpretations
of the Bible, including the idea that Christ conveyed his authority to Peter, who
became the first pope, plus claims about the power Constantine gave the church, to support papal supremacy.

• • •

HUGUCCIO: After the coming of the Truth. Up until the coming of Christ the imperial
and pontifical rights were not separated, for the same man was emperor and pontiff.

... But the offices and rights of the emperor and the pontiff were separated by Christ
and some things, namely temporal affairs, were assigned to the emperor, others,

namely spiritual affairs, to the pontiff, and this was done for the sake of preserving

namely spiritual affairs, to the pontiff, and this was done for the sake of preserving
humility and avoiding pride. If the emperor or the pontiff held all offices he would
easily grow proud but now since each needs the other and sees that he is not fully self-
sufficient he is made humble.... Here it can clearly be gathered that each power,
the apostolic and imperial, was instituted by God and that neither is derived from
the other and that the emperor does not have the sword from the apostle.... All
these contrary arguments seem to imply that the emperor receives the power of the
sword and the imperial authority from the apostle and that the pope makes him
emperor and can depose him. I believe however, that the emperor has the power of
the sword and the imperial dignity from election by the princes and people, ... for
there was an emperor before there was a pope, an empire before a papacy. Again the
words, “Behold, here are two swords” (Luke 22:38), were spoken to symbolize the
fact that the two powers, namely the apostolic and imperial, are distinct and
separate. If, therefore, it is anywhere stated or implied that the emperor has the
power of the sword from the pope, I understand it as meaning the unction and
confirmation which he has from the pope when he swears fidelity to him; for before
this, although he is not called emperor, he is an emperor as

regards dignity though
not as regards unction, and before this he has the power of t
he sword and exercises
it. When it is said that the pope can depose him I believe thi
s to be true, but by the
wil and consent of the princes if he is convicted before the
m. Then I take it, in the
last resort, if he has been convicted and admonished and wil
  not desist or give
satisfaction, he should be excommunicated and al should b
e removed from

[loyalty] to him…. If stil he is not corrected then final y he is
 justly smitten with a
sentence and rightly expel ed by armed force, and another l
egitimately elected. But
by whom is the sentence pronounced? By the lord pope befo
re whom he was
convicted or by his princes if the Roman pontiff has approve
d this.

ALANUS: This indeed is certain according to everyone, that t
he pope has jurisdiction
over the emperor in spiritual matters so that he can bind an
d loose him… but,
according to Huguccio, by no means in temporal matters th
ough the pope can judge
him in temporal matters and depose him by the wish of the
princes who elect him
according to customary law. According to Huguccio the emp
eror has the sword from
God alone and not from the pope except as regards coronati
on and confirmation,
and he has ful imperial jurisdiction beforehand although he
is not cal ed emperor.

But in truth, and according to the Catholic faith, he is subjec t to the pope in
spiritual matters and also receives his sword from him, for t he right of both swords
belongs to the pope. This is proved by the fact that the Lord had both swords on
earth and used both as is mentioned here, and he establishe d Peter as his vicar on
earth and al Peter's successors. Therefore today Innocent h as by right the material
sword. If you deny this you are saying that Christ establishe d a secular prince as his
vicar in this regard. Again Peter said to the Lord, "Behold, he re are two swords"

(Luke 22:38), so the material sword too was with Peter. Agai n if the emperor was
not subject to the pope in temporalities he could not sin aga inst the church in
temporalities. Again the church is one body and so it shal h ave only one head or it wil be a monster.

This opinion is not invalidated by the fact that there were e mperors before there
were popes, because they were only de facto emperors, and none except those who
believed in the true God had a right to the sword; nor do infi del rulers have it
nowadays. Likewise it is not invalidated by the fact that Con stantine conferred
temporal jurisdiction on [pope] Sylvester....

From his plenitude of right the pope could take away the Cit y and other possessions even if the emperor was unwil ing.

The emperor then has the sword from the pope. The electors indeed confer it on
him, not the pope, but every bishop has his bishopric from the pope and yet the
pope does not confer it but rather canonical election of the clergy does. The pope
therefore is the ordinary judge of the emperor in both temporal and spiritual affairs
and can depose him. … But can he depose him for any crime? I answer, rather for
none, unless he is determined to persist in it, and even then perhaps not for any
offence but only for those which harm the people, as for instance the continued
discord of heresy. But could the pope keep the material sword for himself if he
wished? I answer no, because the Lord divided the swords as is said here, and the
church would be gravely disturbed by this.…

CHAPTER 9

CONDITIONS OF WOMEN IN ISLAM, BYZANTINE CHRISTIANITY, AND WESTERN

CHRISTIANITY

The major world religions were at pains to deal with conditio ns for women, through
their treatments of family law and in more general discussio ns of women’s role in
human society. Both Christianity and Islam faced a major te nsion in principle: they
granted women souls and the chance of salvation, but they regarded women as
inferior, more prone to evil. Neither religion undermined patr iarchy. But both
religions granted women opportunities for religious expressi on: they could go on
pilgrimages, for example. Both Muhammad and some early Christian leaders
believed they were giving women important new opportuniti es through family law and religious prescriptions.

Attention to women’s conditions is an important aspect of w orld history in the
postclassical period. It involves two kinds of calculations: th e first is the comparison
of similarities and differences among major societies, such a s the two Christian
religions and Islam; the second is assessment of change ove r time, when patterns are
compared to those of the classical period.

The fol owing selections come from laws and commentary in the Byzantine
Empire, the center of Orthodox Christianity; from Catholic W estern Europe; and
from Islam. There are many similarities in the complex state ments of patriarchy in

al three religions, and these should be the first points to identify. Are there also differences?

The Byzantine Empire obviously shared Christianity with Western Europe, though its Orthodox institutions were separate. Orthodox Christianity continued to allow priests to marry, which may have signaled less fear about sexuality and contamination through contact with women than arose in the West. Because the Byzantine Empire preserved Roman laws and political institutions, it might also have offered some extra protections for women—Rome had been rather careful to combine patriarchy with legal conditions.

Islam poses some obvious problems for interpretation, both in the postclassical period and today. Arab peoples before Islam had a strongly patriarchal society in which women's family rights were not well established. Muhammad believed he added important protections for women—allowing them to divorce, for example, which was simply not possible in Christianity. On the other hand, Islam did not make women equal; they even prayed separately from men. Some Muslims continue the debate today, arguing that feminism is less necessary in Islam than in Christian cultures, because women's rights were more carefully protected in the religion itself.

Are there bases for this argument in the materials derived from religious history?

Questions

1. How does the distinctive power of a particular woman, su ch as Anna Comnena,
the mother of a Byzantine emperor, affect interpretations of women's conditions
more general y? Does it suggest that the patriarchal system had been modified?

2. Why did canon law punish men for adultery more than wo men (at least in
principle)? How does this relate to patriarchal views about w omen?

3. How did the Quran and Christian church (canon) law refle ct beliefs in the

3. How did the Quran and Christian church (canon) law refle ct beliefs in the spiritual equality of both genders?

4. What were the crucial tensions in Islam concerning wome n's spiritual status, rights, and treatment?

5. In what ways is it clear that Byzantium, Western Europe, and the Islamic Middle
East were al patriarchal societies, with women held to be di stinctly inferior?

6. Did specific religions (along with other factors) change wo men's lives?

7. Why were Byzantium and Islam both at pains to distinguis h between women's
private roles and rights and their public roles? Did religion h ave anything to do with this distinction?

8. In which society were women’s property rights better protected, Islam or Western Christianity? Can you think of factors besides religion that might contribute to the difference? Was the Muslim provision of divorce, compared to Christian family law, a distinct advantage for women (even though their divorce rights were inferior to those of men)?

For Further Discussion

1. Compared to the patriarchal systems of classical civilizations (see chapter 5), were women’s conditions improved by the impact of world religions such as Islam and Christianity? In which cultural system, Confucianism or Islam, would a woman be most protected? Which system would be most hostile to female infanticide, and why? How and why did the cultures differ about divorce?

2. Assuming you were an upper-class woman, in which of the three societies would you prefer to have lived during the postclassical period, and why—or do you regard them all as equally confining?

3. Why do some women in the contemporary Middle East argue that Western-style feminism is not necessary because women’s rights can be maintained through Islam?

WOMEN IN ISLAM

The prophet Muhammad devoted considerable attention to women in the Quran, the holy book of Islam held to be inspired by Allah. The strong Is

lamic tendency to offer
rules for various human affairs is demonstrated in detailed f amily laws, which in
turn reveal both key principles applied to women and practic al features of women's
lives in Islamic societies. The second selection is from the H adith, which consists of
col ections of traditions attributed to Muhammad and other early leaders from the
seventh century onward; the Hadith set forth further rules a nd guidelines for
Muslims. A short third selection, from Islamic law in the elev enth century, deals with public issues.

• • •

THE QURAN

O people, observe your Lord; the One who created you from one being and created
from it its mate, then spread from the two many men and w omen....

You shal not covet the qualities bestowed on each other by God; the men enjoy
certain qualities, and women enjoy certain qualities....

The men are made responsible for the women, since God en dowed them with
certain qualities, and made them the bread earners. The rig hteous women wil

certain qualities, and made them the bread earners. The rig hteous women wil
cheerful y accept this arrangement, and observe God's com mandments, even when
alone in their privacy. If you experience opposition from the

women, you shal first
talk to them, then [you may use such negative incentives as
] deserting them in bed,
then you may beat them. If they obey you, you are not perm
itted to transgress against them.…

The Muslim men, the Muslim women, the believing men, the
 believing women,
the obedient men, the obedient women, the truthful men, th
e truthful women, the
steadfast men, the steadfast women, the reverent men, the
reverent women, the
charitable men, the charitable women, the fasting men, the
fasting women, the
chaste men, the chaste women, and the men who commem
orate God frequently, and
the commemorating women; God has prepared for them for
giveness and a great recompense.…

From The Koran, trans. George Sale (New York: R.L. Burt, 19
02). Selections are from
the fol owing suras and verses: 2:221–23, 226–31, 233–
37, 240–41, 282; 4:16, 19–25, 32, 34–35; 24:32–
33, 60; 33:35–59. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

Inheritance

Men ought to have a part of what their parents and kindred l
eave behind them when
they die: and women also ought to have a part of what their
 parents and kindred
leave, whether it be little, or whether it be much; a definite
part is due to them.

GOD hath thus commanded you concerning your children. A
male shal have as
much as the share of two females; but if they be females onl
y, and above two in
number, they shal have two third parts of what the decease
d shal leave; and if
there be but one, she shal have the half.

O true believers, it is not lawful for you to be heirs of women
 against their wil ,
nor to hinder them from marrying others, that ye may take a
way part of what ye
have given them in dowry; unless they have been guilty of a
 manifest crime: but
converse kindly with them. And if ye hate him, it may happe
n that ye may hate a
thing wherein GOD hath placed much good.

Divorce

Those who intend to estrange their wives shal wait four mo nths [for cooling off]; if
they reconcile, then God is Forgiver, Most Merciful. If they go through with the
divorce, then God is Hearer, Knower. The divorced women s hal wait three
menstruations [before marrying another man]. It is not lawf ul for them to conceal
what God has created in their wombs, if they believe in God and the Last Day. [In
case of pregnancy,] the husband's wishes shal supersede t he wife's wishes if he
wants to remarry her. The women have rights, as wel as obl igations, equitably.

Thus, the men's wishes prevail [in case of pregnancy]. God i s Almighty, Most Wise.

...

The divorcees also shal be provided for, equitably. This is a duty upon the righteous....

If you wish to marry another wife, in place of your present w ife, and you had
given the latter a great deal, you shal not take back anythin g you had given her.

Would you take it fraudulently, maliciously, and sinful y? Ho w could you take it
back, after you have been intimate with each other, and aft er they have taken from you a solemn pledge?...

If a couple fears separation, you shal appoint an arbitrator f rom his family and
an arbitrator from her family; if they decide to reconcile, Go d wil help them get

an arbitrator from her family; if they decide to reconcile, Go d wil help them get together....

They consult you; say, “GOD decrees for you the inheritance statutes concerning
the loner. If one dies and leaves no children, and he had a si ster, she gets half the
inheritance. If there were two sisters, they get two-
thirds of the inheritance. If the
siblings are men and women, the male gets a share equal to that of two females.”

God thus clarifies for you, lest you go astray. God is ful y aw are of al things....

The thief, male or female, you shal mark their hands as a p unishment for their
crime, and to serve as a deterrent from GOD. GOD is Almigh ty, Most Wise....

Anyone who works righteousness, male or female, while beli eving, we wil surely
grant them a happy life in this world, and we wil surely pay them their ful
recompense (on the Day of Judgment) for their righteous wo rks.

THE HADITH

He who shows concern for the widows and the unfortunate [ranks as high] as one

who goes on Jihād in the way of Al ah, or one who fasts by d ay and who rises at night [for prayer].

To look at a woman is forbidden, even if it is a look without d esire, so how much the more is touching her.

Said he—upon whom be Al ah's blessing and peace —: "Avoid seven pernicious things." [His Companions] said: "And what are they, O Apost le of Al ah?" He answered: "Associating anything with Al ah, sorcery, deprivi ng anyone of life where Al ah has forbidden that save for just cause, taking usury, d evouring the property of orphans, turning the back on the day of battle, and slanderi ng chaste believing women even though they may be acting carelessly."

Said the Prophet—upon whom be Al ah's blessing and peace —: "I had a look into Paradise and I saw that the poor made up most of its inhabit ants, and I had a look into Hel and saw that most of its inhabitants were women."

Treat women-folk kindly for woman was created of a rib. The crookedest p art of a rib is its upper part. If you go to straighten it out you wil b reak it, and if you leave it alone it wil continue crooked. So treat women in kin dly fashion.

Rules For Muslim Government, Eleventh Century

Exclusion of Women

Nobody may be appointed to the office of qadi [judge] who does not comply ful y with the conditions required to make his appointment valid and his decisions effective.... The first condition is that he must be a man. Thi s condition consists of two qualities, puberty and masculinity. As for the child below puberty, he cannot be held accountable, nor can his utterances have effect against himself; how much less so against others. As for women, they are unsuited to positi ons of authority, although judicial verdicts may be based on what they say. A bu Hanifa said that a woman can act as qadi in matters on which it would be lawf ul for her to testify, but she may not act as qadi in matters on which it would not be lawful for her to testify.

Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, giving a divergent view, al ows a woman to act as qa di in al cases, but no account should be taken of an opinion which is refuted by both the consensus of the community and the word of God. “Men hav e authority over women because of what God has conferred on the one in preference to the other” [Koran 4:38], meaning by this, intel igence and discernment. He do es not, therefore, permit women to hold authority over men.

From Arthur Jeffery, ed., A Reader on Islam (New York: Books for Libraries. Division of Arno Press, 1980). Reprinted by permission of Ayer Comp any Publishers, Inc., North Stratford, NH 03590.

THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

Byzantine family law, not surprisingly, reflected Roman principles, particularly early in the empire. The most important early Byzantine emperor, Justinian (483–565), had codified Roman law. A marriage contract of the eighth century reflects careful concern for legal equity. The Byzantine Empire also produced some extraordinary individual women. Justinian's wife, the empress Theodora, probably made key policy decisions. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Comnenus family dominated the imperial line, producing a period of stable, enlightened rule. The princess Anna was a noteworthy historian, and in the second selection below she describes the role of her grandmother, an empress, in affairs of state. Finally, another law code, from about 900 in the reign of Leo VI, suggests another facet of gender relations in the empire. Does it represent a change from the principles expressed in the earlier marriage contract?

• • •

A MARRIAGE CONTRACT

The marriage of Christians, man and woman, who have reached years of discretion, that is for a man at fifteen and for a woman at thirteen years of age, both being desirous and having obtained the consent of their parents, shall be contracted either by deed or by parol.

A written marriage contract shal be based upon a written a greement providing
the wife's marriage portion; and it shal be made before thre e credible witnesses
according to the new decrees auspiciously prescribed by us. The man on his part
agreeing by it continual y to protect and preserve undiminis hed the wife's marriage
portion, and also such additions as he may natural y make t hereto in augmentation
thereof; and it shal be recorded in the agreement made on that behalf by him, that in case there are no children, one-fourth part thereof shal be secured in settlement.

From Bernard Lewis, ed. and trans. Islam: From the Prophet Muhammed to the
Capture of Constantinople, vol. 2, Religion and Society (New York: Oxford
University Press, 1974), 40. Reprinted by permission of Oxfo rd University Press.

If the wife happens to predecease the husband and there ar e no children of the
marriage, the husband shal receive only one-
fourth part of the wife's portion for
himself, and the remainder thereof shal be given to the ben eficiaries named in the
wife's wil or, if she be intestate, to the next of kin. If the hus band predeceases the
wife, and there are no children of the marriage, then al the wife's portion shal
revert to her, and so much of al her husband's estate as sh al be equal to a fourth
part of his portion shal also inure to her as her own, and the remainder of his estate

shal revert either to his beneficiaries or, if he be intestate, t o his next of kin.

If the husband predecease the wife and there are children of the marriage, the
wife being their mother, she shal control her marriage porti on and al her husband's
property as becomes the head of the family and household.

A HISTORY OF ANNA COMNENA (TWELFTH CENTURY, GRAND DAUGHTER OF EMPEROR ALEXIUS I)
One might be amazed that my father accorded his mother s uch high honor in these

One might be amazed that my father accorded his mother s uch high honor in these
matters and that he deferred to her in al respects, as if he were turning over the
reins of the empire to her and running alongside her while s he drove the imperial
chariot, contenting himself simply with the title of emperor. I ndeed, he had already
passed beyond the period of boyhood, an age especial y wh en lust for power grows
in men of such nature [as Alexius]. He took upon himself the wars against the
barbarians and whatever battles and combats pertained to t hem, while he entrusted
to his mother the complete management of [civil] affairs: th e selection of civil
magistrates, the col ection of incoming revenues and the ex penses of the
government. A person who has reached this point in my text may blame my father
for entrusting management of the empire to the gynaiconite s [women's section of

the palace]. But if he had known this woman’s spirit, how gr eat she was in virtue
and intel ect and how extremely vigorous, he would cease hi s reproach and his
criticism would be changed into admiration. For my grandm other was so dextrous in
handling affairs of state and so highly skil ed in control ing a nd running the
government, that she was not only able to manage the Rom an empire but could
have handled every empire under the sun. She had a vast a mount of experience and
understood the internal workings of many things: she knew how each affair began
and to what result it might lead, which actions were destruct ive and which rather
were beneficial. She was exceedingly acute in discerning wh atever course of action
was necessary and in carrying it out safely. She was not only acute in her thought,
but was no less proficient in her manner of speech. Indeed, she was a persuasive
orator, neither verbose nor stretching her phrases out at gre at length; nor did she
quickly lose the sense of her argument. What she began feli citously she would finish even more so.…

From A Manual of Roman Law, trans. E. Freslfield (Cambridg e: Bowes and Bowes, 1926), 72–
74. Reprinted with the permission of Cambridge University P ress.

From Anna Comnena, Alexiade, vol. 1 (London, 1928), 123–25.

But, as I was saying, my father, after he had assumed power , managed by himself
the strains and labors of war, while making his mother a spe ctator to these actions,
but in other affairs he set her up as ruler, and as if he were her servant he used to
say and do whatever she ordered. The emperor loved her de eply and was dependent
upon her advice (so much affection had he for his mother), and he made his right
hand the executor of her orders, his ears paid heed to her w ords, and everything
which she accepted or rejected the emperor likewise accept ed or rejected. …

Everything which she decided or ordered he found satisfacto ry. Not only was he very
obedient to her as is fitting for a son to his mother, but even more he submitted his
spirit to her as to a master in the science [episteme] of rulin g. For he felt that she
had attained perfection in everything and far surpassed al men of that time in
prudence and in comprehension of affairs.

LEGAL STATUS

I do not know why the ancient authorities, without having th oroughly considered
the subject, conferred upon women the right of acting as wit nesses. It was, indeed,
wel known, and they themselves could not fail to be aware that it was dishonorable
for them to appear frequently before the eyes of men, and t hat those who were
modest and virtuous should avoid doing so. For this reason,

as I have previously
stated, I do not understand why they permitted them to be c al ed as witnesses, a
privilege which resulted in their frequently being associated with great crowds of
men, and holding conversation with them of a character ver y unbecoming to the sex....

And, indeed, the power to act as witnesses in the numerous assemblies of men
with which they mingle, as wel as taking part in public affair s, gives them the habit
of speaking more freely than they ought, and, depriving the m of the morality and
reserve of their sex, encourages them in the exercise of bold ness and wickedness
which, to some extent, is even insulting to men. For is it not an insult, and a very
serious one, for women to be authorized to do something w hich is especial y within the province of the male sex?

Wherefore, with a view to reforming not only the errors of cu stom, but also of
law, We hereby deprive them of the power of acting as witn esses, and by this
constitution forbid them to be cal ed to witness contracts un der any circumstances.

But, so far as matters in which they are exclusively intereste d are concerned, and
when men cannot act as witnesses, as, for instance, in confi nements, and other
things where only women are al owed to be present, they ca n give testimony as to
what is exclusively their own, and which should be conceale d from the eyes of men.

From S. P. Scott, ed., The Civil Law, vol. 17, The Novels of E mperor Leo VI (Cincinnati: Central Trust Co., 1932), 249.

WESTERN EUROPE : CITY AND CANON LAW

The fol owing two documents outline both secular and religi ous laws concerning
women and their rights in marriage. The city of Magdeburg, in northern Germany,
was a prosperous center by the thirteenth century, and man y merchant families
would have had considerable disposable wealth. The codific ation of canon law on
marriage was part of the general systematization of church l aw—and the rise of lawyers—
as European society became more elaborate with economic advance, the
growth of cities, and cultural change. An obvious question: were the provisions of
the two types of law, city and church, essential y compatible , even as they focused on different sets of details?

• • •

A GERMAN CITY'S LAWS, 1261

14. If a man dies leaving a wife, she shal have no share in h is property except what
he has given her in court, or has appointed for her dower. Sh e must have six
witnesses, male or female, to prove her dower. If the man m ade no provision for her,
her children must support her as long as she does not remar ry. If her husband had sheep, the widow shal take them.…

18. No one, whether man or woman, shal , on his sick-
bed, give away more than

three shil ings' worth of his property without the consent of his heirs, and the
woman must have the consent of her husband....

55. When a man dies his wife shal give [to his heirs] his swo rd, his horse and
saddle, and his best coat of mail. She shal also give a bed, a pil ow, a sheet, a
tablecloth, two dishes and a towel. Some say that she shoul d give other things also,
but that is not necessary. If she does not have these things, she shal not give them,
but she shal give proof for each article that she does not ha ve it....

57. If the children are minors, the oldest male relative on th e father's side, if he is
of the same rank by birth, shal receive al these things and preserve them for the
children. ... He shal also be the guardian of the widow until she remarries, if he is of the same rank as she is.

58. After giving the above articles the widow shal take her d ower and al that

58. After giving the above articles the widow shal take her d ower and al that
belongs to her; that is, al the sheep, geese, chests, yarn, be ds, pil ows,... etc., and
there are many other trinkets which belong to her. ... But un cut cloth, and unworked
gold and silver do not belong to her.

From Oliver J. Thatcher and Edgar H. McNeal, eds., A Source Book for Mediæval

History (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1907), 592, 594–95, 600–601.

CHURCH (CANON) LAW ON MARRIAGE, TWELFTH CENTURY

1. [According to John Chrysostom, a leading early theologian:] "Coitus does not make a marriage; consent does; and therefore the separation of the body does not dissolve it, but the separation of the wil . Therefore he who forsakes his wife, and does not take another, is stil a married man. For even if he is now separated in his body, yet he is stil joined in his wil . When therefore he takes another woman, then he forsakes ful y. Therefore he who forsakes is not the adulterer, but he who takes another woman."

2. … When therefore there is consent, which alone makes a marriage, between those persons, it is clear that they have been married….

22. A man may not make a monastic vow without his wife's consent….

If any married man wishes to join a monastery, he is not to be accepted, unless he has first been released by his wife, and she makes a vow of chastity. For if she, through incontinence, marries another man while he is stil living, without a doubt she wil be an adulteress….

24. A husband is not permitted to be celibate without his wife's consent….

26. A wife is not permitted to take a vow of celibacy, unless her husband chooses the same way of life….

Betrothals may not be contracted before the age of seven. For only the consent is
contracted, which cannot happen unless it is understood by each party what is being
done between them. Therefore it is shown that betrothals cannot be contracted
between children, whose weakness of age does not admit consent. … Therefore those
who give girls to boys while they are stil in the cradle, and vice versa, achieve
nothing, even if the father and mother are wil ing and do this, unless both of the
children consent after they have reached the age of understanding….

14. Childbirth is the sole purpose of marriage for women….

23. Adultery in either sex is punished in the same way….

1. A fornicator cannot forsake his wife for fornication….

4. Men are to be punished more severely for adultery than women.

From Emilie Amt, ed., Women’s Lives in Medieval Europe: A Sourcebook (New York:
Routledge, 1993), 79. Reproduced by permission of Routledge / Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

CHAPTER 10

FEUDALISM IN WESTERN EUROPE AND JAPAN

Along with the impact of the world religions on the state, a key development in the
postclassical period was the formation of governments in new areas. This chapter

focuses on distinctive features of that process in Western Eu rope and Japan,
providing another opportunity to deal with key political deve lopments in the postclassical period.

The general issue was this: societies that arose on the fringe s of the classical world

—including Russia and parts of sub-
Saharan Africa, as wel as Japan and northwestern Europe—
often were forming governments with no particular historical precedent. At most, very loose, essential y tribal kingships h ad emerged before (save
in parts of Africa, where more elaborate states preceded this period). In the absence
of highly developed economies, wel -
established political legitimacy, or even many
trained officials, it was difficult to form elaborate states. Wes tern Europe tried
briefly to revive the Roman Empire (under the emperor Char lemagne, around 800

C.E.) but did not succeed. Japan made an attempt to imitate the Chinese Empire in the seventh century but could not.

In Japan and Western Europe, the political relationships kno wn as feudalism
provided a less demanding political system. Feudalism linke d local and regional military leaders—the lords—
with some other military personnel. This was a system
for elites: it did not directly involve the masses of ordinary p eople. A lord formed
ties with other people who had the equipment (horses, som e armor, and weaponry)
necessary to fight. He offered them protection and often his support or some land, or

both, in return for their loyalty and their service in war. This was the essence of the
feudal system. It could provide some orderliness in individua l regions, as opposed to
endemic local fighting; when it was extended to larger units, through feudal ties
among great lords themselves, it could even support a mon archy.

Both Japan and Western Europe established this system in t he postclassical
period, out of similar needs. They were not in contact with e ach other, so it is not
surprising that the two feudalisms, though remarkably simil ar, had some differences

—
differences that would affect the two areas long after feudali sm itself had
perished. In both cases, however, central rulers (like later En glish Kings or shoguns
from the Minamoto family) could use feudalism to organize l arger networks of
royalty. Here, then, is another comparison of societies witho ut contact, developing
separately but resembling each other to an intriguing degre e.

Feudalism in these two societies, at opposite ends of Eurasia , though remarkably
similar in origins and structure, had somewhat different con sequences in the long
run. European feudalism developed into efforts to institution alize contractual
relationships between rulers and vassals; it led in turn to ear ly versions of

parliaments set up to try to make sure that rulers would sta
y within agreed-upon
bounds. Japanese feudalism’s greater stress on loyalty led n
ot to parliaments—which
would arrive only through much later imitation of the West—
but to a sense of group
cohesiveness that stil describes aspects of Japanese manag
ement style and political life.

Questions

1. What basic characteristics of feudalism emerge from the European and Japanese

1. What basic characteristics of feudalism emerge from the European and Japanese
materials? What did lords and vassals gain from a feudal tie ? What were their respective obligations?

2. How was the Magna Carta a feudal document? How had t he king violated
feudalism, and what remedies were proposed?

3. In what ways is it clear that vassals, though required to b e loyal to their lords,
were basical y in the same social class and not to be treated as social inferiors?

4. How much difference was there between the loyalty emp hases in Japanese
feudalism and those in the European version? Would Europe an vassals have agreed
with the extent of devotion displayed in the Japanese Tale of the Heike? Would
Japanese vassals have agreed with the approach taken in th e Magna Carta?

For Further Discussion

1. What conditions account for the emergence of such simila r political systems in Western Europe and Japan?

2. What would a Confucian bureaucrat think of feudalism? O n what grounds would

he criticize it? Would he prefer the Western or the Japanese version?

3. Are there any remnants of feudal ideas and institutions in the Western world today? Why do some observers argue that the special qualities of Japanese feudalism, removed from specific feudal institutions, are still useful in Japan today?

4. How could western feudal elites move to the idea of parliaments, composed of these and other elites who advised the king as feudal lord? Why would this particular evolution of feudalism be more difficult in Japan?

5. What are the differences between feudal and modern ideas of limited government?

EUROPEAN FEUDALISM

Feudal documents were legal records for the most part, and often short. What follows are various documents dating from the seventh to the twelfth centuries that treat different aspects of French and English feudalism.

In the first document, a pagan, that is non-Christian, Viking duke whose people had conquered Normandy is induced to enter a feudal relationship with the king of France, along with marriage to one of the king's daughters. What would each party get out of this relationship? Two documents then describe common feudal property grants and a standard oath of loyalty in what was a very ritual relationship. Next, a wel -

known French bishop offers a more general description—obviously somewhat idealized—
of what feudalism involved. Then a document describes conditions of
separation, while another document highlights standard vassal obligations.

The final document offers excerpts from the English Magna Carta, or great
charter, which the feudal barons imposed by force of arms on King John in 1215 in
defense of feudal rights. John had been trying to extend government powers, and the
passages suggest how new parliamentary-
style institutions might emerge from feudalism.

• • •

EUROPEAN FEUDAL DOCUMENTS

1. Granting Normandy (Tenth Century)

Immediately Charles [French king], having consulted with them, sent Franco,
Archbishop of Rouen, to Rolo, Duke of the [Viking] Pagans. Coming to him he
began to speak with mild words. “Most exalted and distinguished of dukes, wil you
quarrel with the Franks as long as you live? Wil you always wage war on them?

What wil become of you when you are seized by death? Whose creature are you?

Do you think you are God? Are you not a man formed from filth? Are you not dust
and ashes and food for worms? Remember what you are an

d wil be and by whose
judgment you wil be condemned. You wil experience Hel I think, and no longer
injure anyone by your wars. If you are wil ing to become a C hristian you wil be
able to enjoy peace in the present and the future and to dw el in this world with great riches. Charles, a long-
suffering king, persuaded by the counsel of his men, is
wil ing to give you this coastal province that you and Halstig no have grievously
ravaged. He wil also give you his daughter, Gisela, for a wif e in order that peace
and concord and a firm, stable and continuous friendship m ay endure for al time between you and him.…”

From Brian Tierney, Sources of Medieval History, vol. 1 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 126–29, 131, 133-35.

At the agreed time Charles and Rol o came together at the p lace that had been
decided on.… Looking on Rol o, the invader of France, the Fr anks said to one
another, “This duke who has fought such battles against the warriors of this realm is
a man of great power and great courage and prowess and g ood counsel and of great
energy too.” Then, persuaded by the words of the Franks, Ro l o put his hands
between the hands of the king, a thing which his father and grandfather and great-
grandfather had never done; and so the king gave his daugh ter Gisela in marriage to
the duke and conferred on him the agreed lands from the Ri ver Epte to the sea as his
property in hereditary right, together with al Brittany from which he could live.…

2. Granting Fiefs (Landed Estates) (Seventh Century)

Those who from their early youth have served us or our pare nts faithful y are justly rewarded by the gifts of our munificence. Know therefore th at we have granted to that il ustrious man (name), with greatest good wil , the vil a cal ed (name), situated in the county of (name), with al its possessions and extent, in ful as it was formerly held by him or by our treasury. Therefore by the present cha rter which we command to be observed forever, we decree that the said (name) shal possess the vil a of (name), as has been said, in its entirety, with lands, houses, buildings, inhabitants, slaves, woods, pastures, meadows, streams, mil s, and al it s appurtenances and belongings, and with al the subjects of the royal treasury w ho dwel on the lands, and he shal hold it forever with ful immunity from the entra nce of any public official for the purpose of exacting the royal portion of the fi nes from cases arising there: to the extent final y that he shal have, hold, and poss ess it in ful ownership, no one having the right to expect its transfer, and with the ri ght of leaving it to his successors or to anyone whom he desires, and to do with it whatever else he wishes.

3. Oaths of Loyalty

Thus shal one take the oath of fidelity:

By the Lord before whom this sanctuary is holy, I wil to N. b e true and faithful,

and love al which he loves and shun al which he shuns, acc ording to the laws of
God and the order of the world. Nor wil I ever with wil or ac tion, through word or
deed, do anything which is unpleasing to him, on condition t hat he wil hold to me
as I shal deserve it, and that he wil perform everything as i t was in our agreement

as I shal deserve it, and that he wil perform everything as i t was in our agreement
when I submitted myself to him and chose his wil .

It is right that those who offer to us unbroken fidelity should be protected by our
aid. And since such and such a faithful one of ours, by the fa vor of God, coming
here in our palace with his arms, has seen fit to swear trust and fidelity to us in our
hand, therefore we decree and command by the present pre cept that for the future
such and such above mentioned be counted with the numbe r of [fol owers]. And if
anyone perchance should presume to kil him, let him know that he wil be judged guilty of his [value] of 600 shil ings.

4. Fulbert, Bishop of Chartres, on Feudal Obligations (1020)
To Wil iam most glorious duke of the Aquitanians, bishop Ful bert the favor of his prayers.

Asked to write something concerning the form of fealty, I ha ve noted briefly for
you on the authority of the books the things which fol ow. H e who swears fealty to
his lord ought always to have these six things in memory; w hat is harmless, safe,

honorable, useful, easy, practicable. Harmless, that is to say that he should not be injurious to his lord in his body: safe, that he should not be injurious to him in his secrets or in the defenses through which he is able to be secure; honorable, that he should not be injurious to him in his justice or in other matters that pertain to his honor; useful, that he should not be injurious to him in his possessions; easy or practicable, that that good which his lord is able to do easily, he make not difficult, nor that which is practicable he make impossible to him.

However, that the faithful vassal should avoid these injuries is proper, but not for this does he deserve his holding: for it is not sufficient to abstain from evil, unless what is good is done also. It remains, therefore, that in the same six things mentioned above he should faithfully counsel and aid his lord, if he wishes to be looked upon as worthy of his benefice and to be safe concerning the fealty which he has sworn.

The lord also ought to act toward his faithful vassal reciprocally in all these things. And if he does not do this he will be justly considered guilty of bad faith, just as the former, if he should be detected in the avoidance of or the doing of or the consenting to them, would be perfidious and perjured....

5. Lords and Vassals (816)

If anyone shal wish to leave his lord (seniorem), and is able to prove against him
one of these crimes, that is, in the first place, if the lord has wished to reduce him
unjustly into servitude; in the second place, if he has taken c ounsel against his life;
in the third place, if the lord has committed adultery with th e wife of his vassal; in
the fourth place, if he has wilful y attacked him with a drawn sword; in the fifth
place, if the lord has been able to bring defence to his vassa l after he has
commended his hands to him, and has not done so; it is al o wed to the vassal to
leave him. If the lord has perpetrated anything against the v assal in these five points
it is al owed the vassal to leave him.

6. Military Service (1072)

Wil iam, king of the English, to Aethelwig, abbot of Evesham , greeting. I command
you to summon al those who are under your charge and ad ministration that they
shal have ready before me at Clarendon on the octave of Pe ntecost al the knights
that they owe me. Come to me likewise yourself on that day , and bring ready with
you those five knights that you owe me from your abbey.

THE MAGNA CARTA

John, by the grace of God, king of England, lord of Ireland, d uke of Normandy and
Aquitaine, and count of Anjou, to the archbishops, bishops, a bbots, earls, barons,

justiciars, foresters, sheriffs, stewards, servants, and to al hi s bailiffs and loyal
persons, greeting. Know that, having regard to God and for t he salvation of our
souls, and those of al our predecessors and heirs, and unto the honour of God and
the advancement of Holy Church, and for the reform of our r ealm, by the counsel of
our venerable fathers… we have granted:

XII. No scutage [tax] or aid shal be imposed on our kingdom , unless by common
counsel of our kingdom, except for ransoming our person, fo r making our eldest son
a knight, and for marrying our eldest daughter once; and for them there shal not be
levied more than a reasonable aid. In like manner it shal be done concerning aids from the city of London.

XXIX. No constable shal compel any knight to give money in stead of castle
guard, when he is wil ing to perform it in his own person, or (if he himself cannot
do it from any reasonable cause) then by another reliable m an; and if we have led
him or sent him upon military service, he shal be quit of gu ard, in proportion to the
time during which he has been on service because of us.

XXXIX. No freeman shal be taken or imprisoned… or exiled or in anyway
destroyed, nor wil we go upon him nor send upon him, exce pt by the lawful
judgement of his peers or by the law of the land.

LV. Al fines made by us unjustly and against the law of the l and, shal be entirely remitted, or else it shal be done concerning them according to the decision of the five-and-twenty barons of whom mention is made below in (the claus e for) securing the peace, or according to the judgement of the majority of the same....

LXI. Since, moreover, for God and the amendment of our kin gdom and for the better al aying of our quarrel that has arisen between us an d our barons, we have granted al these concessions, desirous that they should enj oy them in complete and firm stability for ever, we give and grant to them the underw ritten security, namely, that the barons choose five-and-twenty barons of the kingdom, whomsoever they wil , who shal be obliged, to observe and hold, and cause to be observed, with al their might, the peace and liberties which we have granted and confirmed to them by this our present Charter, so that if we, or our justiciar, or our bailiffs or any one of our officers, shal in anything be at fault towards anyone, or shal have broken any one of the articles of the peace or of this security, and t he offence be notified to four barons of the aforesaid five-and-twenty, the said four barons shal come to us (or to our justiciar, if we are out of the realm) and, laying the transgression before us, petition to have that transgression redressed without del ay. And if we shal not have corrected the transgression ... within forty days, ... the four barons aforesaid shal refer the matter to the rest of the five-and-twenty barons, and those five-and-

twenty barons shal , together with the community of the wh ole land, distrain and
distress us in al possible ways, namely, by seizing our castl es, lands, possessions,
and in any other way they can, until redress has been obtain ed as they deem fit....

From Statutes of the Realm, vol. 1 (London, 1810), 1 5ff.

JAPANESE FEUDALISM

Japanese feudalism and its origins can be tracked in part thr ough government
decrees. Japan had an emperor from the sixth century onwa rd. But decrees between

decrees. Japan had an emperor from the sixth century onwa rd. But decrees between
the ninth and the twelfth centuries make it clear that the go vernment encountered
increasing difficulties in maintaining order or even disciplinin g its own officials. In
the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a leading family, th e Kamakura
(Minamoto), gained central authority (separate from the em peror, now a largely
religious figurehead). The government, cal ed a shogunate, established feudal ties
with other lords, treating them as vassals with mutual obliga tions. Documents 3 and
4 suggest some of the characteristics, advantages, and limit ations of this feudal
monarchy system. The final two documents describe Japane se feudal ideals. The Tale of the Heike was a wel -
known story of the wars that led up to the Kamakura
shogunate, written shortly thereafter; it is fol owed by a lett

er from a samurai—the characteristic vassal-warrior—
to his son.

• • •

JAPANESE FEUDAL DOCUMENTS

1. On Mat ers Relating to the Business of a Province (1114)
1. Preventing riotous behavior.

When a newly appointed governor travels to the province to which he is assigned,
some of his rōtō [entourage] and other fol owers either rob t hings from other
persons or engage in quarrels among themselves. It is there fore ordered that a newly
appointed governor must select from among his rōtō, pure a nd strong persons who
can engage in the task of stopping this kind of behavior.

From David John Lu, ed., Japan: A Documentary History, vol. 1 (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E.

Sharpe), 103–
10. Copyright © 1997. Reprinted with permission of M. E. Sh arpe, Inc.

2. Do not permit members of your household (ienoko) to spe ak il of others, and
prevent unruly actions of your high ranking rōtō.

If on reflection one does not stop those conditions which lea d to the use of foul
language, and permit one’s rōtō to engage freely in slanderi ng or heaping abuse on
others… as these things continue to multiply, people wil sta rt ridiculing you. When

you take the responsibility of serving the public, you are real y performing
something good for yourself too. But if you do not put a stop to the abuse that some of your fol owers—
whether they be your own most beloved children or rōtō—heap
on others, and let this continue [those who are the object of abuse wil not serve
you]. In this way, you may not be able to col ect taxes and s end them to the central
government. You wil then gain the reputation of being an in effectual governor. If
your children and rōtō cannot uphold one another and also h elp you, your term of
office wil be one of emptiness. If al your fol owers wil purs ue their own fol ies,
you wil be left with no fol owers day and night. Then what b enefit is there [of becoming a governor]?

2. Establishment of Relationship between Lord and Vassals (1184)
Fol owing the destruction of the Ichinotani fortification in Set tsu Province in the
Second Month, members of the Heike have been plundering the various provinces in
the west, and Genji troops have been sent into the region to check the Heike. One of
the means employed has been the sending of Tachibana Ki minari and his men as an
advance column into Sanuki Province to secure the support of the local lords. They
have since submitted to the Minamoto, and a roster containi ng their names has been
transmitted to Kamakura [central government]. Today, His L ordship has sent

instructions to the local lords of Sanuki to take their orders f
rom Kiminari.

[Yoritomo’s monogram]

“Ordered to: Immediate vassals of Sanuki Province

“To submit forthwith to the command of Tachibana Kiminari
and to join in the Kyushu campaign.

“At this time when the Heike are plundering your lands, you
have indicated your
submission to me. A roster of your names has been submitt
ed to me. It is indeed a
most loyal act on your part. Submit forthwith to the comma
nd of Kiminari and
conduct yourselves in a loyal and meritorious manner. Thus
ordered.”

3. The Kamakura Shogunate (1232)

Of the duties devolving on Protectors (shugō) in the provinc
es. In the time of the
august Right General [Yoritomo’s] House, it was settled that
those duties should be
the cal ing out and despatching of the Grand Guard for servi
ce at the capital, the
suppression of conspiracies and rebel ion and the punishme
nt of murder and
violence (which included night attacks on houses, gang robb
ery and piracy)….

Be it noted that no person, even if his family were for gener
ations vassals
(gokenin) of the august House of Minamoto is competent to i
mpress [people] for

military service unless he has an investiture [to the land] of the present date.

4. Tale of the Heike

Recognizing each other, master and retainer spurred their h orses to join each other.

Seizing Kanehira’s hands, Yoshinaka said: “I would have fou ght to the death on the
banks of the Kamo at Rokujō. Simply because of you, howev er, I have gal oped here through the enemy swarms.”

“It was very kind of you, my lord,” replied Kanehira. “I too w ould have fought to
the death at Seta. But in fear of your uncertain fate, I have c ome this way.”

“We are stil tied by karma,” said Yoshinaka. “There must be more of my men
around here, for I have seen them scattered among the hil s . Unrol the banner and raise it high!”…

At this chal enge, [the enemy commander] Tadayori shouted to his men: “Now,
hear this! He is the commander of our enemy. Let him not e scape! Al men—to the
attack!”… When Yoshinaka found himself alone with Kanehir a, he sighed: “My
armor has never weighed upon me before, but today it is he avy.”

“You do not look tired at al , my lord,” replied Kanehira, “and your horse is stil
fresh. What makes it feel so heavy? If it is because you are d iscouraged at having
none of your retainers but me, please remember that I, Kan

ehira, am a match for a
thousand. Since I stil have seven or eight arrows left in my quiver, let me hold back
the foe while you withdraw to the Awazu pine wood. Now I p ray you to put a peaceful end to yourself.”

No sooner had he spoken to his master than another band o f soldiers confronted
them. “Please go to the pine wood, my lord,” said Kanehira again. “Let me fight here to keep them away from you.”

“I would have died in the capital!” replied Yoshinaka. “I have come this far with
no other hope but to share your fate. How can I die apart fro m you? Let us fight until we die together!”

With these words, Yoshinaka tried to ride neck and neck with Kanehira. Now
Kanehira alighted from his horse, seized the bridle of his ma ster’s mount, and
pleaded in tears: “Whatever fame a warrior may win, a wort hless death is a lasting
shame for him. You are worn out, my lord. Your horse is also exhausted. If you are

shame for him. You are worn out, my lord. Your horse is also exhausted. If you are
surrounded by the enemy and slain at the hand of a low, wo rthless retainer of some
unknown warrior, it wil be a great shame for you and me in the days to come. How
disgraceful it would be if such a nameless fel ow could decla re, ‘I cut off the head of
Yoshinaka, renowned throughout the land of Japan!”

From Hiroshi Kitagawa and Bruce T. Tsuchida, trans., The Tal e of the Heike (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1975), 520–23. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

Yoshinaka final y gave in to Kanehira's entreaty and rode off toward the pine wood of Awazu. Kanehira, riding alone, charged into the ban d of some fifty horsemen. Rising high in his stirrups, he cried out in a thund erous voice: "You have often heard of me. Now take a good look. I am Imai no Shirō Kanehira, aged thirty-three, a foster brother of Lord Yoshinaka. As I am a valiant w arrior among the men of Lord Yoshinaka, your master, Yoritomo, at Kamakura must know my name wel .

Take my head and show it to him!"

Kanehira had hardly uttered these words when he let fly his remaining eight arrows one after another without pause. Eight men were sho t from their horses, either dead or wounded. He then drew his sword and brandi shed it as he gal oped to and fro. None of his opponents could chal enge him face to f ace, though they cried out: "Shoot him down! Shoot him down!"

Sanehira's soldiers let fly a shower of arrows at Kanehira, bu t his armor was so strong that none of them pierced it. Unless they aimed at th e joints of his armor, he could never be wounded.

Yoshinaka was now al alone in the pine wood of Awazu. It w as the twenty-first

day of the first month. Dusk had begun to fal . Thin ice cove red the rice fields and
the marsh, so that it was hard to distinguish one from the ot her. Thus it was that
Yoshinaka had not gone far before his horse plunged deep in to the muddy slime.

Whipping and spurring no longer did any good. The horse co uld not stir. Despite his
predicament, he stil thought of Kanehira. As Yoshinaka was turning around to see
how he fared, Tamehisa, catching up with him, shot an arrow under his helmet. It
was a mortal wound. Yoshinaka pitched forward onto the ne ck of his horse. Then
two of Tamehisa's retainers fel upon Yoshinaka and struck o ff his head. Raising it
high on the point of his sword, Tamehisa shouted: "Kiso no Y oshinaka, renowned
throughout the land of Japan as a valiant warrior, has been k il ed by Miura no Ishida Jirō Tamehisa!"

Kanehira was fighting desperately as these words rang in his ears. At that moment
he ceased fighting and cried out: "For whom do I have to fig ht now? You, warriors
of the east, see how the mightiest warrior in Japan puts an e nd to himself!"

Thrusting the point of his sword into his mouth, he flung him self headlong from his
horse so that the sword pierced his head.

Yoshinaka and Kanehira died valiant deaths at Awazu. Could there have been a more heroic battle?

5. A Samurai Instructs His Son

... In dealing with subordinates do not make an obvious disti nction between good and not-
good. Use the same kind of language, give the same kind of treatment to al ,
and thus you wil get the best out of the worst. But you your self must not lose sight
of the distinction between good character and bad character , between capable and
incapable. You must be fair, but in practice you must not for get the difference
between men who are useful and men who are not. Remem ber that the key to
discipline is fair treatment in rewards and in punishments. B ut make al owance for

discipline is fair treatment in rewards and in punishments. B ut make al owance for
minor misdeeds in young soldiers and others, if their conduc t is usual y good.

Do not be careless or negligent in the presence of subordina tes, especial y of older
men. Thus do not spit or snuffle or lounge about on a chest with your legs dangling.

This only gives men the impression that you do not care for their good opinion.

Preserve your dignity. If you behave rudely, they wil tel thei r families and gossip
wil spread. You must treat al servants with proper consider ation and generosity....

Remember, however, that there are times when a command er must exercise his

power of deciding questions of life or death. In those circum stances since human life
is at stake you must give most careful thought to your actio n. Never kil or wound a
man in anger, however great the provocation. Better get so mebody else to
administer the proper punishment. Decisions made in haste before your feelings are
calm can only lead to remorse. Close your eyes and reflect c areful y when you have a difficult decision to make.

When accusations are brought to you, always remember tha t there must be
another side to the question. Do not merely indulge in anger . To give fair decisions
is the most important thing not only in commanding soldiers but also in governing a country.

Excerpted from George Sanson, A History of Japan to 1334 (Stanford, Calif.:
Stanford University Press, 1958), 336. © 1961 by the Board of Trustees of the Leland
Stanford Junior University. Reprinted by permission of the pu blisher.

CHAPTER 11

THE CRUSADES

Muslim and European Reactions

Increasing interactions among civilizations can work in man y different ways. They
can promote mutual influence and imitation. But contact ca n also heighten mutual
hostilities or establish new enmities. This chapter deals with the clash between

Christians and Muslims during the Crusades. Enduring tensio
n between Christian and
Muslim was not the only product of this episode, for the sour
ces suggest other consequences as wel .

During the postclassical period, both religions spread widely.
 Islam was clearly
more successful, however, partly because it took root in a d
ynamic, political y and
commercial y successful region. Often genuinely tolerant of
Christians, whom
Muhammad had regarded as partial y enlightened, Muslims
nevertheless looked
down on Western Europe in this period as a backward, boori
sh place. Muslim
wealth, cities, science, and learning easily surpassed Europe
an levels, and Muslim leaders were wel aware of this fact.

For their part, Christians viewed Islam as an infidel, false reli
gion, al the more
gal ing given Muslim success. There was far less tolerance i
n principle, and tension
was exacerbated by European awareness that Muslims surp
assed them, during this
period, in economic and political achievements.

Christian crusades against Muslim control of the Holy Land (J
erusalem and its
environs) were first cal ed for at the end of the eleventh cen
tury, at a point when the
Arab Caliphate was beginning to decline and Turks control e
d considerable territory.

Feudal warriors from Western Europe volunteered to fight in
the Middle East, for a
time carving out a Christian kingdom of Jerusalem. The Thir

d Crusade, 1188–1192,
involving kings of England, France, and the Holy Roman Emp ire, responded to
successful Muslim attacks on Jerusalem, under the leadershi p of the great Turkish
warrior Saladin. This crusade led to negotiations that establi shed temporary
Christian access to, though not control of, Jerusalem.

The Crusades provided unusual contacts between people, m ainly warriors, of two
different cultures. Europeans learned much about the econo mical y more advanced
Middle East, despite their deep hatred of Islam as a false reli gion and their frequent
attempt to portray Muslims as idol worshipers. Muslims form ed or confirmed a
variety of opinions about Europeans. How much lasting impa ct did impressions of this sort have?

Treatments of the same event—such as the Crusades—
by people from opposite
sides have some fairly standard features. The other side co mmits atrocities, which
contrast with the purity and high aims of our side. Individual participants may
develop a grudging respect for the heroism or the simple hu manity of opponents, a
respect that sometimes contradicts expressions of hatred.

But the accounts offer more than the “you’re another” type of mutual hostility.

The economic gap between the two sides is evident in com ments about Muslim
luxury and European awe. To the extent that the Crusades c

onfirmed not only some
dislike of European Christians but also a sense of their back wardness, they
contributed to a Muslim reluctance to pay attention to chan ges in Europe in

contributed to a Muslim reluctance to pay attention to chan ges in Europe in
succeeding centuries that might have warranted greater op enness.

The Crusades were an interesting episode in the postclassic al period, not an
earthshaking event. They stemmed from significant cultural and other tensions, and
they unintentional y provided materials by which two import ant civilizations can be
compared. They also had some lasting, if largely unexpecte d, side effects in world
history later on, including increasing European interest in tra de with Asia.

Intriguingly, contemporary Islamic extremists have revived t he idea that the West is
engaged in a “crusade” against their religion, a sign that a h istoric conflict can resurface in memory.

Questions

1. In what ways were Christian and Muslim accounts of the C rusades similar? In
what terms might each side praise the other?

2. How did the Christian account try to arouse sentiment ag ainst Muslim treatment
of the Christian religion? How did Muslim accounts try to aro use sentiment
against Christian mistreatment of or scorn for Islam?

3. What elements of Islam prompt Ibn-
Mundiqh, in the final passage, to
simultaneously praise Christ and express shock at the idea o f showing God as a
child? What clearly inaccurate reference to Islam is included in the Christian account—
and why would it have been included?

4. What references in the Muslim accounts particularly sugg est a disdain for
European backwardness? What is the jealousy passage al a bout: given Muslim
(and Christian) views about men's rights concerning women, why was this
probably a backhanded insult, designed to stimulate further disdain against Christians?

5. As expressed in these accounts, were the reasons for Chri stian and Muslim dislike of each other similar?

For Further Discussion

1. Which of the three accounts—al clearly partisan—
strikes you as most accurate,

and why? (Or do they al seem equal y biased?) Which refer ence, in any of the
accounts, seems most clearly distorted? What criteria help s ort out accuracy when
the historical sources are clearly tainted?

2. How do the Crusades and Muslim and Christian accounts of them demonstrate
how these two religions resembled each other more than eit her one resembled
Buddhism, during the postclassical period?

3. What were the most important results of the Crusades?

A CHRISTIAN ACCOUNT

This account was written by Richard of the Holy Trinity, prob ably Richard de
Templo, who was later selected as Prior of the Holy Trinity bu t who served King
Richard as knight or chaplain during the Crusade. His accou nt suggests not only
Christian views of Muslims but also key feudal military value s (see chapter 9). The
subject of his biography, King Richard, known as the Lion-Hearted, won a huge
reputation in England as a noble warrior, even though (or be cause) he spent little
time at home (but he did spend considerable English revenu es). King Richard fought
against his brothers and father and then in 1190 departed fo r the Third Crusade. His
attack on the city of Acre, in al iance with the King of France, failed, but he was
able to negotiate access to the holy places in Jerusalem with the Muslim leader

able to negotiate access to the holy places in Jerusalem with the Muslim leader Saladin. He was captured and held for ransom on the way home and was later killed in a war with France. Richard's reputation as a brave and good king, enhanced by accounts such as this, entered into other English legends such as that of Robin Hood, and it contrasted with the image of his brother, later King John.

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THE CRUSADE OF RICHARD I

King Richard was not yet quite recovered from his illness; yet, anxious to be doing something, he turned his thoughts to the capture of the city, and had it attacked by his men in the hopes of gaining some success with God's assistance. Accordingly he had a kind of hurdle-shed (commonly called a circleia) made and brought up to the ditch outside the city wall. Under its shelter were placed his most skilful crossbowmen; whilst, to hearten his own men for the combat and to dispirit the Saracens [Muslims] by his presence, he had himself carried there on silken cushions.

From this position he worked a crossbow, in the management of which he was very skilful, and slew many of the foes by the bolts and quarrels he discharged. His miners also, approaching the tower against which his stone-casters were being

level ed, by an underground passage dug down towards the foundations, fil ing the
gaps they made with logs of wood, to which they would set f ire, thus causing the
wal s, which had already been shaken by the stone-casters, to fal down with sudden crash.

From T. A. Archer, ed., The Crusade of Richard I (New York: G . P. Putnam's, 1885), 92–95, 97–98, 99, 101–2, 103, 126–27.

Thereupon the king, seeing how difficult the work was and h ow valiant were the
enemies, knowing also how needful it was to kindle men's v alour at critical
moments, thought it more fitting to encourage the young [w arriors] on by promises
of reward than to urge them on by harsh words. For who is t here whom the prospect
of gain wil not entice? Accordingly he proclaimed that he w ould give two gold
pieces to any one who would detach a stone from the wal n ear the before-
mentioned tower. Later he promised three and even four gol d-pieces for each stone.

Then might you see the young men with their fol owers leap forth and rush against
the wal and set themselves zealously to lugging out the sto nes—and this as much
for the sake of praise as of pay.… The height of the wal was very great and it was
of no slight thickness; yet, dispel ing danger, by courage, th ey extracted many a
stone. The Turks rushing against [the assailants] in bands str ove to cast them down
from the wal s; and, while thus engaged in driving back their

enemies, unwarily
exposed themselves to darts; for in their haste they rashly n eglected to put on their
armour. One of the Turks who to his cost was glorying in the arms of Alberic
Clements, with which he had girded himself, did king Richar d wound to death,
piercing him through the breast, with a dart from his crossbo w. Grieving over the
death of this warrior the Turks recklessly rushed forward for vengeance, and, just as
though energetic action were a cure for pain, showed thems elves so bold that it
seemed as if they feared neither darts nor any other missile. Never were our men engaged by warriors—
of any creed whatever—more valorous or apter at defence.

Memory staggers at the recol ection of their deeds. In the pr ess of this conflict
neither armour of strongest proof nor twofold coat of mail n or quilted work was
strong enough to resist the missiles hurled from the stone- casters. Yet, for al this,
the Turks kept countermining from within til they compel ed our men to retreat;
and then they began to raise a furious cry as though their o bject had been attained.

… At last the Pisans [Italians], eager for fame and vengeanc e, scrambled up the

… At last the Pisans [Italians], eager for fame and vengeanc e, scrambled up the
tower itself with a mighty effort; but, bravely as they compo rted themselves, they
too had to retreat before the onset of the Turks, who rushed

on as if mad. Never has
there been such a people as these Turks for prowess in war. And yet, for al the
enemies' valour, the city would on that day have been taken and the whole siege
finished if the entire army had displayed an equal valour. For , you must know, by
far the larger part of the army was at that hour breakfasting ; and, as the attack was
made at an unsuitable time, it did not succeed.

Though its wal s were partly fal en and partly shaken, thoug h a great part of the
inhabitants were slain or weakened by wounds, there stil re mained in the city 6,000

Turks….

[Then leaders] imagined the Christian army had been very k eenly touched at the
death of Alberic Clements and at the loss of sons and kinsm en who had fal en in the
war; and had determined to die or master the Turks— holding that no other course
was consistent with honour. So, by common consent and co unsel, the besieged
begged a truce while they sent notice of their plight to Salad in, hoping that, in
accordance with their Pagan ways, he would ensure their saf ety—as he ought to do

—
by sending them speedy aid or procuring leave for them to quit the city without
disgrace. To obtain this favour, these two noble Saracens, th e most renowned

[warriors] in al Paganism, Mestoc and Caracois, came to our kings, promising to surrender the city, if Saladin did not send them speedy aid. They stipulated, however, that al the besieged Turks should have free leave to go wherever they wished with their arms and al their goods. The king of Franc e and almost al the French agreed to this; but king Richard utterly refused to he ar of entering an empty city after so long and toilsome a siege….

Meanwhile, the Christians' stone-casters never ceased battering the wal s night and day. Seeing this a panic seized the inhabitants and som e, in utter despair, giving way to fear, threw themselves headlong from the wal s by ni ght. Many of them humbly begged to be baptized and made Christians. There i s considerable doubt as to the real merits of these [converts], and not without due r eason, since it is to be presumed that it was terror rather than divine grace that ca used them to make this request. But the ways of salvation are many….

Thus, on the Friday after the translation of the Blessed Bene dict [i.e. July 12], the wealthier and nobler emirs were proffered and accepted as hostages, one month being al owed for the restoration of the Holy Cross and the c ol ection of the captive Christians. When the news of this surrender became known, the unthinking crowd was moved with wrath; but the wiser folk were much rejoice d at getting so quickly

and without danger what previously they had not been able to obtain in so long a
time. Then the heralds made proclamation forbidding any o ne to insult the Turks by
word or deed. No missiles were to be hurled against the wal s or against the Turks if
they chanced to appear on the battlements. On that day, wh en these famous Turks,
of such wonderful valour and warlike excel ence, began strol ing about on the city
wal s in al their splendid apparel, previous to their departur e [our men] gazed on
them with the utmost curiosity. They were wonder-
struck at the cheerful features of
men who were leaving their city almost penniless and whom only the very sternest
necessity had driven to beg for mercy: men whom loss did n ot deject, and whose
visage betrayed no timidity, but even wore the look of victor y. It was only their
superstitious rites and their pitiful idolatry that had robbed s uch warriors of their strength....

On the day of its surrender the city had been in the hands of the Saracens four

On the day of its surrender the city had been in the hands of the Saracens four
years. It was surrendered, as has been already said, on the morrow of the translation
of St. Benedict. But not without horror could the conquerors see the condition of the
churches within the city; nor can they even now remember t he shameful sights they
witnessed there unmoved. What faithful Christian could, wit h tearless eyes, see the

holy features of the crucified Son of God, or even of the sain ts, dishonoured and
defiled? Who would not shudder when he actual y saw the in sulting way in which
the accursed Turks had overthrown the altars, torn down an d battered the holy
crosses? Ay, and they had even set up their own images of Mahomet in the holy
places, introducing foul Mahommedan superstitions, after ca sting out al the
symbols of human redemption and the Christian religion.

MUSLIM ACCOUNTS

The first selection below was written by Bohadin or Beha-ed-Din, born at Mosul in
1145, a Muslim official of Jerusalem and later of Aleppo. He writes of the same
Crusade as did Richard of the Holy Trinity, referring to the ki ngs of England and
France. The second account, dealing with a period earlier in the twelfth century,
comes from the memoirs of Usamah ibn-
Munqidh as an Arab-Syrian warrior. He
writes of a time when the Christian crusaders control ed the city of Jerusalem;
European reactions to Muslim ways (and ibn-
Munqidh’s reactions to the Europeans)
obviously varied from case to case, as often happens when war and occupation combine with a certain familiarity.

• • •

BEH-ED-DIN

The same day Hossâm ad-
Din Ibn Barîc … brought news that the king of France had set out for Tyre, and that they had come to talk over the ma tter of the prisoners and
to see the true cross of the Crucifixion if it were stil in the M usulman [Muslim]

camp, or to ascertain if it real y had been sent to Bagdad. It was shewn to them, and
on beholding it they shewed the profoundest reverence, thro wing themselves on the
ground til they were covered with dust, and humbling them selves in token of
devotion. These envoys told us that the French princes had accepted the Sultan's
proposition, viz., to deliver al that was specified in the treat y by three instalments
at intervals of a month. The Sultan then sent an envoy to Tyr e with rich presents,
quantities of perfumes, and fine raiment—
al of which were for the king of the French.

From T. A. Archer, ed., The Crusade of Richard I (New York: G . P. Putnams, 1885), 127–31.

… Ibn Barîc and his comrades returned to the king of Englan d while the Sultan
went off with his bodyguard and his closest friends to the hil that abuts on
Shefa'Amr.… Envoys did not cease to pass from one side to the other in the hope of
laying the foundation of a firm peace. These negotiations co ntinued til our men had
procured the money and the tale of the prisoners that they were to deliver to the
French at the end of the first period in accordance with the t

reaty. The first
instalment was to consist of the Holy Cross, 100,000 dinars and 1,600 prisoners.

Trustworthy men sent by the Franks [French, or Europeans] t o conduct the
examination found it al complete saving only the prisoners who had been
demanded by name, al of whom had not yet been gathered together. And thus the
negotiations continued to drag on til the end of the first ter m....

This proposition the Sultan rejected, knowing ful wel that if he were to deliver

This proposition the Sultan rejected, knowing ful wel that if he were to deliver
the money, the cross, and the prisoners, while our men were stil kept captive by the
Franks, he would have no security against treachery on the part of the enemy, and
this would be a great disaster to Islam.

Then the king of England, seeing al the delays interposed b y the Sultan to the
execution of the treaty, acted perfidiously as regards his Mu sulman prisoners. On
their yielding the town he had engaged to grant them life, a dding that if the Sultan
carried out the bargain he would give them freedom and suf fer them to carry off
their children and wives; if the Sultan did not fulfil his engag ements they were to be
made slaves. Now the king broke his promises to them and made open display of

what he had til now kept hidden in his heart, by carrying ou t what he had intended
to do after he had received the money and the Frank prison ers. It is thus that people of his nation ultimately admitted.

In the afternoon of Tuesday… about four o'clock, he came o ut on horseback with
al the Frankish army. … The Franks, on reaching the middle of the plain that
stretches between this hil and that of Keisân, close to which place the sultan's
advanced guard had drawn back, ordered al the Musulman prisoners, whose
martyrdom God had decreed for this day, to be brought befo re him. They numbered
more than three thousand and were al bound with ropes. Th e Franks then flung
themselves upon them al at once and massacred them with sword and lance in cold
blood. Our advanced guard had already told the Sultan of th e enemy's movements
and he sent it some reinforcements, but only after the mass acre. The Musulmans,
seeing what was being done to the prisoners, rushed agains t the Franks and in the
combat, which lasted til nightfal , several were slain and wo unded on either side.

On the morrow morning our people gathered at the spot and found the Musulmans
stretched out upon the ground as martyrs for the faith. They even recognised some
of the dead, and the sight was a great affliction to them. Th e enemy had only spared
the prisoners of note and such as were strong enough to wo rk.

The motives of this massacre are differently told; according to some, the captives
were slain by way of reprisal for the death of those Christians whom the Musulmans
had slain. Others again say that the king of England, on deciding to attempt the
conquest of Ascalon, thought it unwise to leave so many prisoners in the town after
his departure. God alone knows what the real reason was.

USAMAH IBN-MUNQIDH

… A case illustrating their [the Europeans'] curious medicine is the following: The lord of al-
Munaytirah wrote to my uncle asking him to dispatch a physician
to treat certain sick persons among his people. My uncle sent him a Christian
physician named Thābit. Thābit was absent but ten days when he returned. So we
said to him, "How quickly hast thou healed thy patients!" He said:
They brought before me a knight in whose leg an abscess had grown; and a
woman afflicted with imbecility. To the knight I applied a small poultice
until the abscess opened and became well; and the woman I put on diet and
made her humor wet. Then a Frankish physician came to them and said,

"This man knows nothing about treating them." He then said to the knight,

"Which wouldst thou prefer, living with one leg or dying with two?" The

latter replied, “Living with one leg.” The physician said, “Bri ng me a strong
knight and a sharp ax.” A knight came with the ax. And I wa s standing by.

Then the physician laid the leg of the patient on a block of w ood and bade
the knight strike his leg with the ax and chop it off at one bl ow. Accordingly

s

s

the knight strike his leg with the ax and chop it off at one bl ow. Accordingly he struck it—while I was looking on—
one blow, but the leg was not severed.

He dealt another blow, upon which the marrow of the leg flo wed out and
the patient died on the spot. He then examined the woman and said, “This is
a woman in whose head there is a devil which has possesse d her. Shave off
her hair.” Accordingly they shaved it off and the woman beg an once more to eat their ordinary diet—
garlic and mustard. Her imbecility took a turn for
the worse. The physician then said, “The devil has penetrate d through her
head.” He therefore took a razor, made a deep cruciform inc ision on it,
peeled off the skin at the middle of the incision until the bon e of the skul
was exposed and rubbed it with salt. The woman also expire d instantly.

Thereupon I asked them whether my services were needed any longer, and
when they replied in the negative I returned home, having le arned of their medicine what I knew not before.

From Usamah ibn-Munqidh, Memoirs: An Arab-
Syrian Gentleman and Warrior in the
Period of the Crusades, ed. Philip Hitti, (Princeton, N. J.: Princ eton University Press, 1987), 67–68, 70, 162–
65. Copyright © Viola Winder.

I have, however, witnessed a case of their medicine which w as quite different from that.

The king of the Franks had for treasurer a knight named Ber nard [barnād], who
(may Al ah’s curse be upon him!) was one of the most accur sed and wicked among
the Franks. A horse kicked him in the leg, which was subseq uently infected and
which opened in fourteen different places. Every time one of these cuts would close
in one place, another would open in another place. Al this h appened while I was
praying for his perdition. Then came to him a Frankish physi cian and removed from
the leg al the ointments which were on it and began to was h it with very strong
vinegar. By this treatment al the cuts were healed and the man became wel again.

He was up again like a devil….

Newly arrived Franks are especial y rough: One insists that U sāmah should pray eastward.—
Everyone who is a fresh emigrant from the Frankish lands is

ruder in
character than those who have become acclimatized and ha ve held long association
with the Moslems. Here is an il ustration of their rude charac ter.

Whenever I visited Jerusalem I always entered the Aq a Mos que, beside which
stood a smal mosque which the Franks had converted into a church. When I used to
enter the Aq a Mosque, which was occupied by the Templars [al-dāwiyyah], who
were my friends, the Templars would evacuate the little adjo ining mosque so that I
might pray in it. One day I entered this mosque, repeated th e first formula, “Al ah is
great,” and stood up in the act of praying, upon which one o f the Franks rushed on
me, got hold of me and turned my face eastward saying, “T his is the way thou
shouldst pray!” A group of Templars hastened to him, seized him and repel ed him
from me. I resumed my prayer. The same man, while the oth ers were otherwise
busy, rushed once more on me and turned my face eastwar d, saying, “This is the way
thou shouldst pray!” The Templars again came in to him and expel ed him. They
apologized to me, saying, “This is a stranger who has only r ecently arrived from the
land of the Franks and he has never before seen anyone pra ying except eastward.”

Thereupon I said to myself, “I have had enough prayer.” So I went out and have ever
been surprised at the conduct of this devil of a man, at the c

hange in the color of his
face, his trembling and his sentiment at the sight of one pra
ying towards the qiblah

[direction of Mecca].

Another wants to show to a Moslem God as a child.—
I saw one of the Franks

Another wants to show to a Moslem God as a child.—
I saw one of the Franks come to al-Amīr Muʻīn-al-
Dī (may Al ah's mercy rest upon his soul!) when he was in
the Dome of the Rock and say to him, "Dost thou want to se
e God as a child?"

Muʻ¯n-al-
Dīn said, "Yes." The Frank walked ahead of us until he showe
d us the
picture of Mary with Christ (may peace be upon him!) as an i
nfant in her lap. He
then said, "This is God as a child." But Al ah is exalted far ab
ove what the infidels say about him!

The Franks are void of al zeal and jealousy. One of them ma
y be walking along
with his wife. He meets another man who takes the wife by t
he hand and steps aside
to converse with her while the husband is standing on one si
de waiting for his wife
to conclude the conversation. If she lingers too long for him,
 he leaves her alone with the conversant and goes away.

Here is an il ustration which I myself witnessed:
When I used to visit Nāblus, I always took lodging with a ma
n named Muʻizz,
whose home was a lodging house for the Moslems. The hous
e had windows which

opened to the road, and there stood opposite to it on the ot
her side of the road a
house belonging to a Frank who sold wine for the merchants
. He would take some
wine in a bottle and go around announcing it by shouting, “S
o and so, the merchant,
has just opened a cask ful of this wine. He who wants to bu
y some of it wil find it
in such and such a place.” The Frank’s pay for the announce
ment made would be the
wine in that bottle. One day this Frank went home and found
 a man with his wife in
the same bed. He asked him, “What could have made thee
enter into my wife’s
room?” The man replied, “I was tired, so I went in to rest.” “
But how,” asked he,

“didst thou get into my bed?” The other replied, “I found a b
ed that was spread, so I
slept in it.” “But,” said he, “my wife was sleeping together w
ith thee!” The other
replied, “Wel , the bed is hers. How could I therefore have pr
evented her from using
her own bed?” “By the truth of my religion,” said the husban
d, “if thou shouldst do
it again, thou and I would have a quarrel.” Such was for the
Frank the entire
expression of his disapproval and the limit of his jealousy.

CHAPTER 12

MERCHANTS AND TRADE

The postclassical period witnessed an important expansion
of trade, within many
civilizations and across their fluid boundaries. Merchants gai

ned a growing role in
West Africa, throughout the Islamic world, in Europe (both e ast and west), and in
East Asia. Many traded local y, though international mercha nts made the biggest
impression. Chinese commercial centers grew rapidly, suppo rting a more urban
environment. At the same time, many societies had reservat ions about merchants.

Aristocrats worried about their social claims, rulers might en vy their wealth, priests
and philosophers questioned their motives. The clash of cult ures, between religion
and materialism, was particularly intense because of the co mplex new forces at
work in these centuries. A genuine ambivalence about merc hants was common throughout the postclassical world—
and it could affect merchants themselves, as
wel as how they were treated.

This chapter deals with trade and its cultural impacts. It pro vides another set of
comparisons among three trading societies and also a chanc e to deal with change during the period itself.

The description of the twelfth-
century British merchant Godric was written by a
biographer attracted to his saintly life (most merchants did not, it should be
emphasized, become saints). It suggests both actual activiti es and cultural values.

The Muslim description of merchants' vices and merits come s from the great
historian and philosopher Ibn Khaldun, a North African who

wrote in the fourteenth
century. The Chinese essay on merchants was written by Ch
ang Han, early in the
sixteenth century (right after the postclassical period and m
ore than a half-century
after the Ming dynasty had ended its most vigorous internati
onal trade). Chang Han
was a Ming official whose family had made a fortune in the t
extile industry, which
helps explain the combination of Confucian and reformist re
marks.

Questions

1. What kinds of uneasiness did Muslim observers have about trade? In what way did they support trade?

2. How did Chinese concerns about merchant motives differ from those of Christianity?

3. How did Islam offer a distinctive combination of trade and cultural goals—this one more favorable to trade without slighting religion? In what ways did Islam and Christianity, such similar religions in many respects, differ over the validity of trade; would a Godric story have been probable in Islam?

4. What exceptions or ambiguities do the sources suggest, even as they emphasize high ideals? What kinds of activities in Europe clearly represented crasser motives than those of a holy merchant like Godric? Why, in fact, did Godric not enter a holy calling initially—what kinds of motives drew him to trade?

5. How could merchant activity increase within China—as it did in the postclassical period, as cities and business houses prospered—within an official Confucian framework? How did the Confucian bureaucracy collaborate?

6. Do the sources suggest that Europe was becoming wealthier than China by the late postclassical period?

For Further Discussion

1. In light of the postclassical sources and comparisons, how would you rate the argument that no matter what their professed values, most people and societies are motivated by a desire for profit and wil expand commercial y whenever they can? Is a desire for economic gain an inherent part of human nature?

2. Which came first in world history: concern about trade or economic limitations?

Did Christianity cause Western Europe's initial commercial lag in the postclassical period, or did economic decline encourage Christian concerns? How did Confucianism affect actual Chinese economic patterns in the postclassical period and beyond?

3. How do postclassical discussions of trade and merchants compare with the discussions probable in the modern world?

A MUSLIM VIEW: IBN KHALDUN

Ibn Khaldun was one of the greatest historians and geographers of al time. Born in Tunis, North Africa, he lived from 1332 to 1406. He served as an official in Tunis, Morocco, and Spain and traveled widely, final y settling, as a scholar, in Egypt. His great work was the Kitab al-Ibar (universal history), which included comments on the active trade that he saw around him, at the time when Muslim commercial success was stil near its height.

• • •

CHARACTERISTICS OF TRADERS

Commerce, as we have said before, is the increasing of capi tal by buying goods and attempting to sel them at a price higher than their cost. Thi s is done either by waiting for a rise in the market price; or by transporting the goods to another place where they are more keenly demanded and therefore fetch a higher price; or, lastly, by sel ing them on a long-term credit basis. Commercial profit is smal , relatively to the capital invested, but if the capital is large, even a low ra te of profit wil produce a large total gain.

In order to achieve this increase in capital, it is necessary to have enough initial capital to pay in cash the sel ers from whom one buys goods ; it is also necessary to sel for cash, as honesty is not widespread among people. T his dishonesty leads on the one hand to fraud and the adulteration of goods, and on the other to delays in payment which diminish profits because capital remains idle during the interval. It also induces buyers to repudiate their debts, a practice whic h is very injurious to the merchant’s capital unless he can produce documentary evid ence or the testimony of eyewitness. Nor are magistrates of much help in such cases, because they necessarily judge on evident proofs.

As a result of al this, the trader can only secure his meagre profits by dint of much effort and toil, or indeed he may wel lose not only pro fits but capital as wel .

Hence, if he is known to be bold in entering law suits, carefu l in keeping accounts,

stubborn in defending his point of view, firm in his attitude t
owards magistrates, he
stands a good chance of getting his due. Should he not have
these qualities, his only
chance is to secure the support of a highly placed protector
who wil awe his debtors
into paying him and the magistrates into meting justice out
to him. Thus he gets
justice spontaneously in the first case, and by compulsion in
the second. Should a
person, however, be lacking in boldness and the spirit of ent
erprise and at the same

person, however, be lacking in boldness and the spirit of ent
erprise and at the same
time have no protector to back him up, he had better avoid
trade altogether, as he
risks losing his capital and becoming the prey of other merc
hants. The fact of the
matter is that most people, especial y the mob and the tradi
ng classes, covet the
goods of others; and but for the restraint imposed by the ma
gistrates al goods
would have been taken away from their owners....

The manners of tradesmen are inferior to those of rulers, an
d far removed from
manliness and uprightness. We have already stated that tra
ders must buy and sel
and seek profits. This necessitates flattery, and evasiveness,
litigation and
disputation, al of which are characteristic of this profession.
And these qualities
lead to a decrease and weakening in virtue and manliness. F
or acts inevitably affect
the soul; thus good acts produce good and virtuous effects i

n the soul while evil or
mean acts produce the opposite. Hence the effects of evil ac ts wil strike root and
strengthen themselves, if they should come early in life and repeat themselves; while
if they come later they wil efface the virtues by imprinting t heir evil effects on the
soul; as is the case with al habits resulting from actions.

From Charles Issawi, ed. and trans. An Arab Philosophy of Hi story: Selections from
the Prolegomena of Ibn Khaldun (London: John Murray, 1950), 68–70, 78, 80, 81.

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These effects wil differ according to the conditions of the tr aders. For those of
them who are of mean condition and in direct contact with t he cheating and
extortion of sel ers wil be more affected by these evils and f urther removed from
manliness.... The other kind of traders are those who are pro tected by prestige and
do not have to undertake directly such operations. Such per sons are very rare indeed
and consist of those who have acquired wealth suddenly, by inheritance or by other,
unusual means. This wealth enables them to get in touch wi th the rulers and thus to
gain prestige and protection so that they are released from practising these things

[viz. buying and sel ing] themselves; instead, they entrust s uch business to their

agents. Moreover the rulers, who are not indifferent to the w ealth and liberality of
such traders, protect them in their right and thus free them from certain unpleasant
actions and their resulting evil effects. Hence they wil be m ore manly and
honourable than the other kind of trader; yet certain effects wil stil make
themselves felt behind the veil, inasmuch as they stil have to supervise their agents and employees in their doings—
but this only takes place to a limited extent and its
effects are hardly visible....

... Consider, as an example, the lands of the East, such as E gypt, Syria, Persia,
India, or China; or the lands lying North of the Mediterranea n. Because social life is
flourishing there, notice how wealth has increased, the state has grown stronger,
towns have multiplied, trade has prospected prospered, con ditions have improved....

As for Trade, although it be a natural means of livelihood, ye t most of the
methods it employs are tricks aimed at making a profit by s ecuring the difference
between the buying and sel ing prices, and by appropriating the surplus. This is why

[religious] Law al ows the use of such methods, which, altho ugh they come under
the heading of gambling, yet do not constitute the taking wi thout return of other people's goods....

Should their standard of living, however, rise, so that they b egin to enjoy more

than the bare necessities, the effect wil be to breed in them a desire for repose and
tranquil ity. They wil therefore cooperate to secure superflui ties; their food and
clothing wil increase in quantity and refinement; they wil e nlarge their houses and

clothing wil increase in quantity and refinement; they wil e nlarge their houses and
plan their towns for defence. A further improvement in their conditions wil lead to
habits of luxury, resulting in extreme refinement in cooking and the preparation of
food; in choosing rich clothing of the finest silk; in raising lof ty mansions and castles
and furnishing them luxuriously, and so on. At this stage the crafts develop and
reach their height. Lofty castles and mansions are built and decorated sumptuously,
water is drawn to them and a great diversity takes place in t he way of dress,
furniture, vessels, and household equipment.

Such are the townsmen, who earn their living in industry or t rade. Their gains are
greater than those working in agriculture or animal husband ry and their standard of
living higher, being in line with their wealth. We have shown , then, that both the
nomadic and the urban stages are natural and necessary.

A CHRISTIAN VIEW: REGINALD OF DURHAM ON SAINT GODRI C

This excerpt from a biography of Godric, an English merchan t who later became a

saint, both describes actual merchant activities in Europe an
d provides an example of an established literary-
religious form of writing in Christian Europe in which the
main point was to stress the saint's virtues and use biograp
hy as an inspiration to
others. There may be some distortion of reality here; certain
ly, some aspects of the
merchant condition have to be discovered by reading betwe
en the lines.

• • •

This holy man's father was named Ailward, and his mother E
dwenna; both of
slender rank and wealth, but abundant in righteousness and
 virtue. … When the boy
had passed his childish years quietly at home; then, as he b
egan to grow to
manhood, he began to fol ow more prudent ways of life, and
 to learn careful y and
persistently the teachings of worldly forethought. Wherefore
 he chose not to fol ow
the life of a husbandman, but rather to study, learn and exer
cise the rudiment of
more subtle conceptions. For this reason, aspiring to the me
rchant's trade, he began
to fol ow the chapman's [peddler's] way of life, first learning
 how to gain in smal
bargains and things of insignificant price; and thence, while
yet a youth, his mind
advanced little by little to buy and sel and gain from things
of greater expense. For,
in his beginnings, he was wont to wander with smal wares a
round the vil ages and
farmsteads of his own neighborhood; but, in process of time,
 he gradual y associated

himself by compact with city merchants. Hence, within a bri ef space of time, the
youth who had trudged for many weary hours from vil age t o vil age, from farm to
farm, did so profit by his increase of age and wisdom as to tr avel with associates of
his own age through towns and boroughs fortresses and citi es, to fairs and to al the
various booths of the marketplace.... He went along the high way, neither puffed up
by the good testimony of his conscience nor downcast in the nobler part of his soul by the reproach of poverty....

From Reginald of Durham, “Life of St. Godric,” in G. G. Coult on, ed., Social Life in
Britain from the Conquest to the Reformation (Cambridge: C ambridge University Press, 1918), 415–
20. Reprinted with the permission of Cambridge University P ress.

Yet in al things he walked with simplicity; and, in so far as h e yet knew how, it
was ever his pleasure to fol ow in the footsteps of the truth. For, having learned the
Lord’s Prayer and the Creed from his very cradle, he oftenti mes turned them over in
his mind, even as he went alone on his longer journeys; and, in so far as the truth
was revealed to his mind, he clung thereunto most devoutly in al his thoughts
concerning God. At first, he lived as a [salesman] for four ye ars in Lincolnshire,
going on foot and carrying the smal est wares; then he trave l ed abroad, first to St

going on foot and carrying the smal est wares; then he trave l ed abroad, first to St
Andrews in Scotland and then for the first time to Rome. On his return, having
formed a familiar friendship with certain other young men w ho were eager for
merchandise, he began to launch upon bolder courses, and t o coast frequently by sea
to the foreign lands that lay around him. Thus, sailing often t o and fro between
Scotland and Britain, he traded in many divers wares and, a mid these occupations,
learned much worldly wisdom. … He fel into many perils of the sea, yet by God's
mercy he was never wrecked; for He who had upheld St Pete r as he walked upon the
waves, by that same strong right arm kept this His chosen v essel from al misfortune
amid these perils. Thus, having learned by frequent experie nce his wretchedness
amid such dangers, he began to worship certain of the Saint s with more ardent zeal,
venerating and cal ing upon their shrines, and giving himself up by wholehearted
service to those holy names. In such invocations his prayers were oftentimes
answered by prompt consolation; some of which prayers he learned from his fel ows
with whom he shared these frequent perils; others he col ec ted from faithful hearsay;
others again from the custom of the place, for he saw and vi sited such holy places
with frequent assiduity. Thus aspiring ever higher and higher , and yearning upward
with his whole heart, at length his great labours and cares b ore much fruit of

worldly gain. For he laboured not only as a merchant but als
o as a shipman… to
Denmark and Flanders and Scotland; in al which lands he fo
und certain rare, and
therefore more precious, wares, which he carried to other pa
rts wherein he knew
them to be least familiar, and coveted by the inhabitants be
yond the price of gold
itself; wherefore he exchanged these wares for others covet
ed by men of other lands.

… Hence he made great profit in al his bargains, and gather
ed much wealth in the
sweat of his brow; for he sold dear in one place the wares w
hich he had bought elsewhere at a smal price.

Then he purchased the half of a merchant-
ship with certain of his partners in the
trade; and again by his prudence he bought the fourth part
of another ship. At
length, by his skil in navigation, wherein he excel ed al his
fel ows, he earned promotion to the post of steersman.…

[On his travels] he oftentimes touched at the island of Lindis
farne, wherein St
Cuthbert had been bishop, and at the isle of Farne, where th
at Saint had lived as an
anchoret, and where St Godric (as he himself would tel afte
rwards) would meditate
on the Saint’s life with abundant tears. Thence he began to
yearn for solitude, and to
hold his merchandise in less esteem than heretofore.…

And now he had lived sixteen years as a merchant, and beg
an to think of spending
on charity, to God’s honour and service, the goods which he

had so laboriously
acquired. He therefore took the cross as a pilgrim to Jerusale
m, and, having visited
the Holy Sepulchre, came back to England by way of St Jam
es [of Compostel a]. Not
long afterwards he became steward to a certain rich man of
his own country, with
the care of his whole house and household. But certain of th
e younger household
were men of iniquity, who stole their neighbours' cattle and
thus held luxurious
feasts, whereat Godric, in his ignorance, was sometimes pre
sent. Afterwards,
discovering the truth, he rebuked and admonished them to
cease; but they made no
account of his warnings; wherefore he concealed not their in
iquity, but disclosed it
to the lord of the household, who, however, slighted his advi
ce. Wherefore he
begged to be dismissed and went on a pilgrimage, first to St
Gil es and thence to
Rome the abode of the Apostles, that thus he might knowing
ly pay the penalty for
those misdeeds wherein he had ignorantly partaken. I have
often seen him, even in
his old age, weeping for this unknowing transgression....

On his return from Rome, he abode awhile in his father's ho
use; until, inflamed

On his return from Rome, he abode awhile in his father's ho
use; until, inflamed
again with holy zeal, he purposed to revisit the abode of the
Apostles and made his
desire known unto his parents. Not only did they approve his
purpose, but his

mother besought his leave to bear him company on this pilg rimage; which he gladly granted, and wil ingly paid her every filial service that was h er due. They came therefore to London; and they had scarcely departed from th ence when his mother took off her shoes, going thus barefooted to Rome and back to London. Godric, humbly serving his parent, was wont to bear her on his shou lders....

Godric, when he had restored his mother safe to his father's arms, abode but a brief while at home; for he was now already firmly purposed to give himself entirely to God's service. Wherefore, that he might fol ow Christ the more freely, he sold al his possessions and distributed them among the poor. Then, tel ing his parents of this purpose and receiving their blessing, he went forth to n o certain abode, but whithersoever the Lord should deign to lead him; for above al things he coveted the life of a hermit.

A CHINESE VIEW: CHANG HAN

This passage was written early in the sixteenth century, righ t after the postclassical period and more than a half-century after the Ming dynasty had stopped its international trade expeditions. Of the three authors in this c hapter, Chang Han came the closest to having merchant experience of his own. He came from a family that had made a fortune in the textile industry, but he hims elf was sent to Confucian schools and became an official in the Ming dynasty. His back

ground helps explain
the combination of Confucian and reformist remarks.

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• • •

ESSAY ON MERCHANTS

Money and profit are of great importance to men. They seek profit, then suffer by it,
yet they cannot forget it. They exhaust their bodies and spiri ts, run day and night,
yet they stil regard what they have gained as insufficient.…

Those who become merchants eat fine food and wear elega nt clothes. They ride on beautiful y caparisoned, double-harnessed horses—dust flying as they race
through the streets and the horses' precious sweat fal ing lik e rain. Opportunistic
persons attracted by their wealth offer to serve them. Pretty girls in beautiful long-
sleeved dresses and delicate slippers play string and wind in struments for them and compete to please them.

Merchants boast that their wisdom and ability are such as to give them a free
hand in affairs. They believe that they know al the possible transformations in the
universe and therefore can calculate al the changes in the h uman world, and that

the rise and fal of prices are under their command. They ar
e confident that they
wil not make one mistake in a hundred in their calculations.
 These merchants do
not know how insignificant their wisdom and ability real y ar
e. As the Chuang Tzu
says: “Great understanding is broad and unhurried; little un
derstanding is cramped and busy.”

Because I have traveled to many places during my career as
 an official, I am

Because I have traveled to many places during my career as
 an official, I am
familiar with commercial activities and business conditions i
n various places. The
capital is located in an area with mountains at its back and a
 great plain stretching
in front. The region is rich in mil et, grain, donkeys, horses, f
ruit, and vegetables,
and has become a center where goods from distant places a
re brought. Those who
engage in commerce, including the foot peddler, the cart pe
ddler, and the
shopkeeper, display not only clothing and fresh foods from t
he fields but also
numerous luxury items such as priceless jade from K’un-
lun, pearls from the island of Hai-
nan, gold from Yunnan, and coral from Vietnam. These preci
ous items,
coming from the mountains or the sea, are not found in cent
ral China. But people in
remote areas and in other countries, unafraid of the dangers
 and difficulties of
travel, transport these items step by step to the capital, ma
king it the most prosperous place in the empire.…

Profits from sel ing tea and the officials' income from the tea tax are usual y ten to twenty percent of the original investment. By contrast, m erchants' profits from sel ing salt and the officials' income from the salt tax can re ach seventy to eighty percent of the original invested capital. In either case, the m ore the invested capital, the greater the profit; the less the invested capital, the less the profit. The profits from sel ing tea and salt enrich the nation as wel as the me rchants. Skil ful merchants can make great profits for themselves while the i nept ones suffer losses.

This is the present state of the tea and salt business.

In our Chekiang province it appears that most of the rich gai n their wealth from engaging in salt trade. But the Chia family in Wu-ling became rich from sel ing tea and have sustained their prosperity for generations. The "Bo ok of Chou" [one of the oldest classics] says: "If farmers do not work, there wil be a n insufficiency of food; if craftsmen do not work, there wil be an insufficiency of too ls; if merchants do not work, circulation of the three necessities wil be cut off, whic h wil cause food and materials to be insufficient."

Foreigners [in the Northwest] are recalcitrant and their gree d knows no bounds.

At the present time our nation spends over one mil ion cash yearly from our treasury on these foreigners, stil we cannot rid ourselves of their de

mands. What is more, the
greedy heart is unpredictable. If one day they break the trea ties and invade our
frontiers, who wil be able to defend us against them? I do n ot think our present
trade with them wil ensure us a century of peace.

As to the foreigners in the Southeast, their goods are useful to us just as ours are
to them. To use what one has to exchange for what one doe s not have is what trade
is al about. Moreover, these foreigners trade with China und er the name of tributary
contributions. That means China’s authority is established a nd the foreigners are
submissive. Even if the gifts we grant them are great and th e tribute they send us is
smal , our expense is stil less than one ten-
thousandth of the benefit we gain from
trading with them. Moreover, the Southeast sea foreigners a re more concerned with
trading with China than with gaining gifts from China. Even i f they send a large
tribute offering only to receive smal gifts in return, they wil stil be content. In
addition, trading with them can enrich our people. So why d o we refrain from the trade?

Some people may say that the Southeast sea foreigners hav e invaded us several
times so they are not the kind of people with whom we shou ld trade. But they
should realize that the Southeast sea foreigners need Chine se goods and the Chinese
need their goods. If we prohibit the natural flow of this merc handise, how can we

prevent them from invading us? I believe that if the sea trad
e were opened, the

prevent them from invading us? I believe that if the sea trad
e were opened, the
trouble with foreign pirates would cease. These Southeast s
ea foreigners are simple
people, not to be compared to the unpredictable Northeast s
ea foreigners. Moreover,
China’s exports in the Northwest trade come from the natio
nal treasury. Whereas the
Northwest foreign trade ensures only harm, the sea trade pr
ovides us with only gain.

How could those in charge of the government fail to realize t
his?

Turning to the taxes levied on Chinese merchants, though th
ese taxes are needed
to fil the national treasury, excessive exploitation should be
 prohibited. Merchants
from al areas are ordered to stop their carts and boats and
have their bags and
cases examined whenever they pass through a road or river
checkpoint. Often the
cargoes are overestimated and thus a falsely high duty is de
manded. Usual y
merchants are taxed when they enter the checkpoint and ar
e taxed again at the
marketplace. When a piece of goods is taxed once, the merc
hant can stil make some
profit while complying with the state’s regulations. But toda
y’s merchants often are
stopped on the road for additional payments and also suffer
extortions from the
clerks. Such exploitation is hard and bitter enough but, in ad

dition, the merchants
are taxed twice. How can they avoid becoming more and mo
re impoverished?

When I was Vice-
President of the Board of Public Works in Nanking, I was also
in
charge of the customs duties on the upper and lower stream
s of the Black Dragon
River. At that time I was working with Imperial Censor Fang
K'o-yung. I told him:

"In antiquity, taxes on merchants were in the form of volunt
ary contributions based
on official hints, not through levies. Levying taxes on merch
ants is a bad policy. We
should tax people according to their degree of wealth or pov
erty. Who says we
cannot have good government!" Fang agreed with me, so w
e lowered the taxes on
the merchants some twenty percent. After the taxes were lo
wered, merchants
became wil ing to stop at the checkpoints. Al boats stopped
when they should and
the total tax income received from merchants increased fifty
percent. From this
example one can see that the people can be moved by bene
volent policies.

CHAPTER 13

THE MONGOL ERA

Conquests and Connections

This chapter compares the experiences of China, Russia, an
d Western Europe during

the period of the Mongol conquests in the thirteenth and fou rteenth centuries. The development of interlocking Mongol empires, cal ed khanate s, produced significant but diverse consequences in world history. Coming on the h eels of the decline of Arab world power, the Mongol episode facilitated vital excha nges among previously separate civilizations while producing new tensions in large parts of Asia and Eastern Europe.

The Mongols, a herding people from Central Asia, gained im portant leadership structure and cultural values from interacting with more for mal civilizations such as China. Contacts along China’s northern border increased for several centuries. New leadership, and possibly some population pressure, inspired a wave of military ventures in the thirteenth century under the aegis of Chingg is Khan. The Mongols swept through the empire of China from 1206 onward and c ontrol ed the society for over a century. They pushed into the Middle East, toppling t he Arab caliphate and chal enging Turkish forces, and into Southeast Asia. They als o conquered Russia (1236), which they loosely control ed for almost two centuri es. Mongol victories in Poland and Hungary did not lead to durable conquests in the rest of Europe. Two efforts to conquer Japan also failed, leading to a growing sen se of confidence and isolation there. Even the consequences of failure, however, r eveal the awesome sweep of Mongol power.

Overal , the Mongol era in world history had two results: it caused disruption and resentment, and it provided unusual, stimulating international contacts.

Mongol overlords were resented in most of their holdings, despite efforts by individual rulers, such as the famous Kublai Khan in China, to adapt to established political and cultural traditions. Although some Chinese officials assisted the Mongols in return for specific gains, such as the preservation of Chinese unity, there were many points of discord. Confucianists believed that the Mongols scorned their commitment to bureaucracy and hierarchy. Kublai Khan praised Confucianism on occasion, but he utilized non-Confucian officials and, along with other leaders, increasingly inclined to the Buddhist religion, which Chinese officialdom had previously rejected.

The Russian situation was somewhat different. The resentment was strong here, too, in part because Mongol leaders concentrated on military coercion and demands for taxes and tribute, rather than the more systematic government developed in China. The cultural clash was different but severe, for Russia was committed to Orthodox Christianity, and its religious leaders condemned the Mongols as pagans, possibly a punitive visitation from God.

If the Mongol period meant resentment and disruption in key civilizations, it meant new opportunity for other peoples. Many Muslims ap

preciated trade
opportunities with Mongol China and reported their awe at t he wealth of the leading
cities. Western Europeans responded even more eagerly, de spite criticism of the
Mongol commitment to “pagan” religions. Since Europe was spared any direct
Mongol invasions, European religious and commercial leader s took advantage of

Mongol invasions, European religious and commercial leader s took advantage of
Mongol tolerance of foreign travelers and trading activities. Direct European
contacts with China were established for the first time in wo rld history, and as a
result the Europeans gained access to China’s superior tech nology. European appetite
for trade with Asia, already encouraged by the Crusades (se e chapter 9), increased as wel .

The Mongol era, decisive in Eurasian history toward the end of the postclassical
mil ennium, was also brief. China regained independence, wi th its new Ming
dynasty, in 1328. Russia won increasing autonomy by the la te fourteenth century, an
effort spearheaded by the dukes of the Moscow region, and then attained ful
autonomy around 1450, pushing the Mongol overlords farth er and farther back into
central Asia. With these changes, the period of easy Wester n contact with East Asia
ended as wel . But after the Mongol period, the Eurasian civi lizations did not return
to the previous status quo. The diverse results of the Mongol

experience continued to
affect policies of expansion and isolation, and the heady peri
od of technological exchange continued to be exploited.

Questions

1. What characteristics did even sympathetic Chinese obser vers assign to the
Mongols? Why was it easy to look down on Mongol habits de spite the Mongols'

success in conquest?

2. What does the Mongol description of the conquest of Chin a suggest about probable Chinese reactions?

3. What does the Novgorod Chronicle suggest about Russia' s cultural levels and
social unity as it encountered Mongol pressures?

4. What was Novgorod's reaction to the Tartars (Mongols)? H ow did Russian
religious authorities describe Tartar characteristics? How did their reactions compare with those of the Chinese?

5. How did Novgorod actual y deal with the Tartars? Judging by this city's
experience, what were the major impacts of the Mongol inva sion on postclassical
Russia? Did the Mongols cause or rather reflect the Russian disarray?

6. How did the Mongol approach to Russia differ from Kublai Khan's efforts in
China? What did the Mongols want in each case? What migh t explain the differences in goals?

7. How did the Russian experience with the Mongols compar e with that of China?

Which society was more disrupted, and why?

8. How did Marco Polo try to appeal both to critical and to envious impressions of
Mongol rulers? Why would both reactions seem appropriate to a Western European audience?

9. How did Marco Polo's reactions explain why Western Europe was ready to gain
from the new contacts with East Asia? Why did Russia not develop a similar set of contacts?

For Further Discussion

1. How did the Mongol experience affect later Russian policies: what might be
predicted about later interests in expansion and about later attitudes toward Asia?

2. What were the long-
term consequences of the Mongol experience in China? How and why did Russia's and China's "post-
Mongol" policies diverge?

3. Why was the Mongol era important for Western Europe? How did Marco Polo's

3. Why was the Mongol era important for Western Europe? How did Marco Polo's
account compare with earlier European reactions to cultural contact, as suggested
by previous travelers and by the tales of the Crusades? What kinds of
misperceptions stil accompanied Western beliefs about societies such as China, and why?

MONGOLS IN CHINA: LI CHIH-CH’ANG AND THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE

MONGOLS

The first of the fol owing selections is a Taoist emissary's im pressions of the Mongols under Chinggis Khan, as the Mongol invasion of China began . Li Chih-Ch'ang, accompanying a Taoist master summoned by the khan into central Asia, had favorable discussions with the khan, who professed interest in the religion. Li's view, correspondingly, was less jaded than that of Confucian offici als later on. But even these Chinese certainly saw the Mongols as very different: h ow did their reactions predict wider Chinese distaste for Mongol rule? The second s election is by an unknown author, perhaps someone in Chinggis's household writing about his conquests shortly after his death. The account was cal ed Th e Secret History of the Mongols.

From Li Chih-Ch'ang, The Travels of an Alchemist, trans. Arthur Weley (W estport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976), 67–68, 106–7. Reprinted by permission of Routledge UK.

• • •

LI CHIH-CH'ANG

The people live in black waggons and white tents; they are a l herdsmen and hunters. Their clothes are made of hides and fur; they live o n meat and curdled milk.

The men wear their hair in two plaits that hang behind the e
ars. The married women wear a head-dress of birch-
bark, some two feet high. This they general y cover with
a black wool en stuff; but some of the richer women use red
silk. The end (of this head-
dress) is like a duck; they cal it ku-
ku. They are in constant fear of people
knocking against it, and are obliged to go backwards and cr
ouching through the doorways of their tents.

They have no writing. Contracts are either verbal or recorde
d by tokens carved
out of wood. Whatever food they get is shared among them,
 and if any one is in
trouble the others hasten to his assistance. They are obedie
nt to orders and unfailing
in their performance of a promise. They have indeed preserv
ed the simplicity of primeval times.…

Both men and women plait their hair. The men’s hats are oft
en like yüan-shanmao

[theatrical caps], trimmed with al kinds of coloured stuffs, w
hich are embroidered with cloud-
patterns, and from the hats hang tasseled pendants. They a
re worn by al
holders of official rank, from the notables downwards. The c
ommon people merely
wear round their heads a piece of white muslin about six fee
t long. The wives of rich
or important people wind round their heads a piece of black
or purple gauze some
six or seven feet long. This sometimes has flowers embroide
red on it or woven
patterns. The hair is always worn hanging down. Some cove
r it in a bag of floss-silk

which may be either plain or coloured; others wear a bag of cloth or plain silk.

Those who cover their heads with cotton or silk look just like Buddhist nuns. It is the women of the common people who do so. Their clothes are general y made of cotton, sewn like a straining-bag, narrow at the top and wide at the bottom, with sleeves sewn on. This is cal ed the under robe and is worn b y men and women alike.

sleeves sewn on. This is cal ed the under robe and is worn b y men and women alike.

Their carriages, boats and agricultural implements are made very differently from ours. Their vessels are usual y of brass or copper; sometime s of porcelain. They have a kind of porcelain that is very like our Ting [delicate] ware. For holding wire they use only glass. Their weapons are made of steel. In their ma rkets they use gold coins without a hole in the middle. There are native written charac ters on both sides. The people are often very tal and strong; so much so that they c an carry the heaviest load without a carrying-beam. If a woman marries and the husband becomes poor, she may go to another husband. If he goes on a journey and does not come back for three months, his wife is al owed to marry again. Oddly eno ugh some of the women have beards and moustaches. There are certain persons cal ed dashman who understand the writing of the country and are in charge of r ecords and documents.

THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE MONGOLS

Conquering Northern China, 1211–1215

After this in the Year of the Sheep

Chingis Khan set out to fight the people of Cathy [Northern China].

First he took the city of Fuzhou

then marching through the Wild Fox Pass

he took Xuandefu.

From here he sent out an army under Jebe’s command
to take the fortress at the Zhuyongguan.

When Jebe arrived he saw the Zhuyongguan was wel defen ded, so he said:

“I’l trick them and make them come out in the open.

I’l pretend to retreat

and when they come out I’l attack them.”

So Jebe retreated and the Cathayan army cried:

“Let’s go after them!”

They poured out of their fortifications

until the val eys and mountainsides were ful of their soldier s.

Jebe retreated to Sondi-i-wu Ridge

and there he turned his army around to attack

as the enemy rushed towards him in waves.

The Cathayan army was beaten

and close behind Jebe’s forces

Chingis Khan commanding the great Middle Army attacked a s wel , forcing the Cathayan army to retreat,

From Paul Kahn, The Secret History of the Mongols: The Origi n of Chingis Kahn
(Boston: Cheng & Tsui Company, 1998). Copyright © 1984, 1998 by Paul Kahn.

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kil ing the finest and most courageous soldiers of Cathay, the Jurchin and Kara Khitan fighters,

slaughtered them along the sides of Zhuyongguan

so that their bodies lay piled up like rotting trees….

Recruiting Administrators, 1220s

Once he had conqured the Moslem people

Chigis Khan appointed agents to govern in each of their citie s.

From the city of Gurganj came two Khawarezm [present-day Uzbekistan]

Moslems,

Moslems,

a father and son named Yalavech and Masgud,

who explained to Chingis Khan the customs and laws of thes e cities and the customs by which they were governed.

Chingis Khan appointed the Khwarezm Masgud head of the agents who governed the cities of the Turkestan:

Bukhara, Samarkand, Guranj, Khotan, Kashgar, Yarkand, and Kusen Tarim.

And his father Yalavech he made governor of the city of Zho ngdu in Cathay.

Since among al the Moslems Yalavech and Masgud

were the most skil ed at the customs and laws for governing cities, he appointed them the governors of Cathay,

along with our own agents....

RUSSIAN REACTIONS: THE NOVGOROD CHRONICLE

The Novgorod Chronicle is one of the most vital documents f rom postclassical Russia—
or what is more properly cal ed Kievan Russia, the first devel opment of a
Russian civilization centered in what is now western Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.

Maintained by Orthodox monks and reflecting their fervent r eligion, the Chronicle
detailed major events, without much interpretation save tha t inspired by religious
and local loyalties. Novgorod was a trading city of 250,000 p eople on the route
between Scandinavia and Byzantium. As Kievan Rus fel apa

rt in the twelfth century,
Novgorod developed an increasingly independent regional g
overnment and army.

During the mid–
thirteenth century (from 1240 to 1263) the city was ruled by
Prince
Alexander Nevsky, who won important victories over Germa
ns and Swedes but submitted to Mongol—
cal ed Tartar in the Chronicle—tax gatherers in order to buy
his city's independence. Alexander also visited Mongol leade
rs to negotiate for his
city. Mongol incursions occurred, but Novgorod remained the
only Russian state to
escape ful Mongol (Tartar) control. Only in the late fourteent
h century did the city
begin to lose more of its independence, to the expanding Ru
ssian government now based in Moscow.

From Robert Mitchel and Nevil Forbes, eds., The Chronicle o
f Novgorod (1076–
1471) (London: Royal Historical Society, 1914), 186–
88. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

• • •

A.D. 1224. The same year for our sins, unknown tribes came
, whom no one exactly
knows, who they are, nor whence they came out, nor what t
heir language is, nor of
what race they are, nor what their faith is; but they cal the
m Tartars.... God alone
knows who they are and whence they came out. Very wise
men know them exactly,
who understand books; but we do not know who they are, b
ut have written of them

here for the sake of the memory of the Russian Princes and of the misfortune which
came to them from them. For we have heard that they have captured many countries....

A.D. 1238. And the accursed ones having come thence took Moscow, Pereyaslavl,
Yurev, Dmitrov, Volok, and Tver; there also they kil ed the so n of [King] Yaroslav.

And thence the lawless ones came and invested [the city of] Torzhok on the festival
of the first Sunday in Lent. They fenced it al round with a fe nce as they had taken
other towns, and here the accursed ones fought with batteri ng rams for two weeks.

And the people in the town were exhausted and from Novgo rod there was no help
for them; but already every man began to be in perplexity a nd terror. And so the
pagans took the town, and slew al from the male sex even t o the female, al the

pagans took the town, and slew al from the male sex even t o the female, al the
priests and the monks, and al stripped and reviled gave up their souls to the Lord in
a bitter and a wretched death, on March 5, the day of the co mmemoration of the
holy Martyr Nikon, on Wednesday in Easter week. And there, too, were kil ed Ivanko the Posadnik of Novi-
torg, Yakin Vlunkovich, Gleb Borisovich and Mikhailo Moiseivich. And the accursed godless ones then pushed on f rom Torzhok by the road

of Seregeri right up to Ignati’s cross, cutting down everybod y like grass, to within

[50 miles] of Novgorod. God, however, and the great and sa cred apostolic cathedral
Church of St. Sophia, and St. Kyuril, and the prayers of the h oly and orthodox
archbishop, of the faithful Princess, and of the very reverend monks final y ended the attack....

The same winter the accursed raw-
eating Tartars, Berkai and Kasachik, came with
their wives, and many others, and there was a great tumult i n Novgorod, and they
did much evil in the provinces, taking contribution for the ac cursed Tartars. And the
accursed ones began to fear death; they said to [Prince] Ale xander: “Give us guards,
lest they kil us.” And the Prince ordered… al the sons of th e Boyars [nobles] to
protect them by night. The Tartars said: “Give us your numb ers for tribute or we wil
run away.” And the common people would not give their nu mbers for tribute but
said: “Let us die honourably for St. Sophia and for the angeli c houses.” Then the
people were divided: who was good stood by St. Sophia and by the True Faith; and
they made opposition; the greater men bade the lesser be c ounted for tribute. And
the accursed ones wanted to escape, driven by the Holy Spir it, and they devised an
evil counsel how to strike at the town at the other side, and the others at this side by
the lake; and Christ’s power evidently forbade them, and th ey durst not. And

becoming frightened they began to crowd to one point to St. Sophia, saying: “Let us
lay our heads by St. Sophia.” And it was on the morrow, the Prince rode down …and
the accursed Tartars with him, and by the counsel of the evil they numbered
themselves for tribute; for the Boyars thought it would be ea sy for themselves, but
fal hard on the lesser men. And the accursed ones began to ride through the streets,
writing down the Christian houses; because for our sins God has brought wild beasts
out of the desert to eat the flesh of the strong, and to drink t he blood of the Boyars.

And having numbered them for tribute and taken it, the acc ursed ones went away,
and Alexander fol owed them, having set his son Dmitri on t he throne.

THE WEST AND THE MONGOLS: MARCO POLO

Marco Polo was one of the last, and certainly the most famo us, Western travelers to
Mongol China. It is important to remember that a substantial series of travelers
visited in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and many of them wrote accounts.

Early emissaries, sent by the Pope, usual y saw China and th e Mongols in
disapproving religious terms, their censure heightened by fe ar of military prowess.

Later travelers, including Marco Polo, took a somewhat more accepting view, though

hints of the earlier approach remained. Increasingly, their re ports contained
wondrous elements mixed with a fairly realistic, if awed, app raisal of China. Marco
Polo repeated a number of legends about fabulous wealth a nd mythical kings, along
with some solid data that increased European knowledge of Asia and of the benefits of contact. Marco Polo (1254–
1324) came from a Venetian merchant family; his
uncle and his father had gone to China in 1266. The family i ncluded Marco on a
later visit, and he apparently became a favorite of Kublai Kh an, who made use of
him on business matters and in administering a city. Marco P olo returned to Italy
and was later imprisoned during a war with Genoa; it was he re that he wrote his
account, which long served as the principal source of Europe an information on

account, which long served as the principal source of Europe an information on
China. Recent historical scholarship has cast some doubt on his trip; he may not
have actual y gone to China, but rather repeated his father’s and uncle’s account, as
wel as available Persian guide books, while glorifying himse lf in the best Italian
Renaissance fashion. Nevertheless, his account reflected an d promoted European
ideas about the Mongols and about China.

From The Travels of Marco Polo the Venetian, ed. and trans. Wil iam Marsden (New York: Doubleday, 1948), 134–35, 152–53, 178, 211, 216, 218, 221–22, 243–45.

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In the middle of the hal , where the grand khan sits at table, there is a magnificent piece of furniture, made in the form of a square coffer, each side of which is three paces in length, exquisitely carved in figures of animals, and gilt. It is hol ow within, for the purpose of receiving a capacious vase, shaped like a jar, and of precious materials, calculated to hold about a tun, and fil ed with win e. On each of its four sides stands a smal er vessel, containing about a hogshead, one of which is fil ed with mare's milk, another with that of the camel, and so of t he others, according to the kinds of beverage in use. Within this buffet are also the cups or flagons belonging to his majesty, for serving the liquors. Some of th em are of beautiful gilt plate. Their size is such that, when fil ed with wine or other li quor, the quantity would be sufficient for eight or ten men. Before every two p ersons who have seats at the tables, one of these flagons is placed, together with a ki nd of ladle, in the form of a cup with a handle, also of plate; to be used not only for taking the wine out of the flagon, but for lifting it to the head. This is observed as wel with respect to the women as the men. The quantity and richness of the plate b elonging to his majesty

[are] quite incredible. Officers of rank are likewise appointed , whose duty it is to see
that al strangers who happen to arrive at the time of the fe stival, and are
unacquainted with the etiquette of the court, are suitably ac commodated with
places; and these stewards are continual y visiting every par t of the hal , inquiring of
the guests if there is anything with which they are unprovide d, or whether any of
them wish for wine, milk, meat, or other articles, in which ca se it is immediately brought to them by the attendants....

... From the city of Kanbalu there are many roads leading to the different
provinces, and upon each of these, that is to say, upon ever y great high road, at the distance of twenty-
five or thirty miles, accordingly as the towns happen to be situated, there are stations, with houses of accommodation f or travel ers, cal ed yamb or post-
houses. These are large and handsome buildings, having se veral wel -

furnished apartments, hung with silk, and provided with eve rything suitable to
persons of rank. Even kings may be lodged at these stations in a becoming manner,
as every article required may be obtained from the towns an d strong places in the
vicinity; and for some of them the court makes regular provi sion. At each station
four hundred good horses are kept in constant readiness, in order that al messengers
going and coming upon the business of the grand khan, and al ambassadors, may
have relays, and, leaving their jaded horses, be supplied wit

h fresh ones. Even in
mountainous districts, remote from the great roads, where t here are no vil ages, and
the towns are far distant from each other, his majesty has e qual y caused buildings
of the same kind to be erected, furnished with everything ne cessary, and provided
with the usual establishment of horses. He sends people to dwel upon the spot, in
order to cultivate the land, and attend to the service of the post; by which means
large vil ages are formed. In consequence of these regulatio ns, ambassadors to the
court, and the royal messengers, go and return through ever y province and kingdom
of the empire with the greatest convenience and facility; in al of which the grand

of the empire with the greatest convenience and facility; in al of which the grand
khan exhibits a superiority over every other emperor, king, or human being. In his
dominions no fewer than two hundred thousand horses are t hus employed in the
department of the post, and ten thousand buildings, with sui table furniture, are kept
up. It is indeed so wonderful a system, and so effective in its operation, as it is
scarcely possible to describe. If it be questioned how the po pulation of the country
can supply sufficient numbers of these duties, and by what means they can be
victual ed, we may answer, that al the idolaters [Chinese], and likewise the
Saracens [Turks], keep six, eight, or ten women, according t o their circumstances, by

whom they have a prodigious number of children; some of t
hem as many as thirty
sons capable of fol owing their fathers in arms; whereas with
 us a man has only one
wife, and even although she should prove barren, he is oblig
ed to pass his life with
her, and is by that means deprived of the chance of raising
a family. Hence it is that
our population is so much inferior to theirs....

... [In Western China] these idolatrous people are treacherou
s and cruel, and
holding it no crime or turpitude to rob, are the greatest thiev
es in the world. They
subsist by the chase and by fowling, as wel as upon the frui
ts of the earth.

Here are found the animals that produce the musk, and suc
h is the quantity, that
the scent of it is diffused over the whole country. ... In the ri
vers gold-dust is found in very large quantities....

Very different were [the habits] of Kublai-
khan, emperor of the Tartars, whose
whole delight consisted in thoughts of a warlike nature, of th
e conquest of countries, and of extending his renown....

Of the province of Nan-ghin. Nan-
ghin is the name of a large and distinguished
province of Manji, situated towards the west. The people are
 idolaters, use paper
money in currency, are subjects of the grand khan, and are l
argely engaged in
commerce. They have raw silk, and weave tissues of silver a
nd gold in great
quantities, and of various patterns. The country produces ab

undance of corn [grain],
and is stored as wel with domestic cattle as with beasts and
 birds that are the
objects of the chase, and plenty of tigers. It supplies the sov
ereign with an ample
revenue, and chiefly from the imposts levied upon the rich a
rticles in which the merchants trade.…

Sin-
gui is a large and magnificent city, the circumference of whi
ch is twenty
miles. The inhabitants are idolaters, subjects of the grand kh
an, and use his paper
money. They have vast quantities of raw silk, and manufactu
re it, not only for their
own consumption, al of them being clothed in dresses of sil
k, but also for other
markets. There are amongst them some very rich merchants
, and the number of
inhabitants is so great as to be a subject of astonishment. …
 They have amongst
them many physicians of eminent skil , who can ascertain th
e nature of the disorder,
and know how to apply the proper remedies. There are also
persons distinguished as
professors of learning, or, as we should term them, philosop
hers, and others who
may be cal ed magicians or enchanters. On the mountains n
ear the city, rhubarb
grows in the highest perfection, and is from thence distribut
ed throughout the
province. Ginger is likewise produced in large quantities, an
d is sold at so cheap a
rate, that forty pounds weight of the fresh root may be had f
or the value, in their money, of a Venetian silver groat.…

Upon leaving the city of Kue-lin-
fu, and travel ing three days, during which you
are continual y passing towns and castles, of which the inha
bitants are idolaters,
have silk in abundance, and export it in considerable quantit
ies, you reach the city
of Unguen. This place is remarkable for a great manufacture
of sugar, which is sent

of Unguen. This place is remarkable for a great manufacture
of sugar, which is sent
from thence to the city of Kanbalu for the supply of the cour
t. Previously to its being
brought under the dominion of the grand khan, the natives
were unacquainted with
the art of manufacturing sugar of a fine quality, and boiled it
in such an imperfect
manner, that when left to cool it remained in the state of a d
ark-brown paste. But at
the time this city became subject to his majesty’s governme
nt, there happened to be
at the court some persons from Babylon who were skil ed in
the process, and who,
being sent thither, instructed the inhabitants in the mode of
refining the sugar by means of the ashes of certain woods.…

Travel ing fifteen miles further in the same direction, you co
me to the city of Kan-
giu. … In this place is stationed a large army for the protecti
on of the country, and
to be always in readiness to act, in the event of any city ma
nifesting a disposition to
rebel. Through the midst of it passes a river, a mile in breadt
h, upon the banks of
which, on either side, are extensive and handsome buildings
. In front of these, great

numbers of ships are seen lying, having merchandise on boa
rd, and especial y sugar,
of which large quantities are manufactured here also. Many
vessels arrive at this
port from India, freighted by merchants who bring with them
 rich assortments of
jewels and pearls, upon the sale of which they obtain a cons
iderable profit. ... The
ships coming from India ascend the river as high up as the c
ity, which abounds with
every sort of provision, and has delightful gardens, producin
g exquisite fruits....

... At the end of five days' journey, you arrive at the noble a
nd handsome city of Zai-tun, which has a port on the sea-
coast celebrated for the resort of shipping,
loaded with merchandise, that is afterwards distributed thro
ugh every part of the
province of Manji. The quantity of pepper imported there is s
o considerable, that
what is carried to Alexandria, to supply the demand of the w
estern parts of the
world, is trifling in comparison, perhaps not more than the h
undredth part.

CHAPTER 14

AFRICA IN THE POSTCLASSICAL WORLD

Major developments took shape in sub-
Saharan Africa during the postclassical
period. Large kingdoms formed in West Africa, including Gha
na and then Mali, in
the region the Arabs cal ed the Sudan. Trading cities develo
ped along the east
African coast. Islam spread widely and had great influence, t

hough the majority of sub-
Saharan Africans remained polytheists. In turn, Africa played
a significant role
in the world trade of the period, and also developed centers
of Islamic learning.

Sources for sub-
Saharan Africa in the postclassical period are, however, som
ewhat
limited. The most important written documents come from t
ravelers, mainly North
African Arabs but also, by the end of the period, a few Europ
eans. These accounts
have the advantage of an outsider perspective, but they als
o reflect the biases and
the pockets of ignorance foreign visitors often display. They
reveal much about the
observers themselves, and their cultures of origin—
and in the process they help
establish the context in which African trade and cultural con
nections developed.

The three documents in this chapter al deal with the southe
rn Sahara and the
Sudanic region, though they focus on different specific place
s. Two emanate from
Islamic travelers, including the most tireless tourist of the po
stclassical era, Ibn
Battuta. One comes from a European merchant. Al suggest
significant characteristics of this wide zone of Africa.

Questions

1. What common African features do the three documents describe, concerning political, cultural, and economic activity?

2. What are the most important weaknesses of the traveler accounts, in terms of distorting biases or apparent ignorance?

3. Which of the three accounts seems most reliable, and why?

4. Do the accounts suggest significant differences in the evaluation of Africa between Muslim travelers on the one hand and the European Christian on the other? What might explain major differences?

5. What kinds of interregional contacts did the Sudanic kingdoms maintain in the postclassical period?

For Further Discussion

1. Do the accounts suggest potential differences between the African-Arab relations and the African-European relations that would develop in the next world history period?

2. How did the political institutions of sub-Saharan Africa compare with those of the Middle East and Western Europe during the postclassical period?

ABD AL-AZIZ AL-BAKRI

Abd al-Aziz al-
Bakri was a Muslim scholar in Spain in the eleventh century (he died
in 1084). He never traveled to Africa directly, but accumulated many other accounts
(most of which have since been lost) and also met many travelers and merchants
coming from the Sudan. He provides one of the most important sources available on

coming from the Sudan. He provides one of the most important sources available on Africa in the period.

• • •

This is the independent kingdom of the Farwiyyun. Among the strange things found
there is a pool where water collects and in it a plant grows of which the roots are
the surest means of strengthening and aiding sexual powers. The king reserves this
for himself and does not allow anyone else to partake of it. He owns an enormous
number of women, and when he wants to make the round of them he warns them
one day before, takes the medicine, and then takes them all in turn and scarcely
flags. One of the neighboring Muslim kings gave him precious gifts, requesting some
of this plant in exchange. In return he gave presents of equal value and wrote a
letter saying: “Muslims may lawfully wed only a few women, and I fear that if I sent
you this medicine you would not be able to restrain yourself and you would commit
excesses which your religion makes unlawful. I am however,

sending you an herb
which wil enable an impotent man, if he eats it, to beget chi ldren.” In the country
of the Farwiyyun salt is exchanged for gold.

GHANA AND THE CUSTOMS OF ITS INHABITANTS

Ghana is a title given to their kings; the name of the region i s Akwar, and their king today, namely in the year 460/1067–8 is Tunka Manin. He ascended the throne in
455/1063. The name if his predecessor was Basi and he bec ame their ruler at the age
of 85. He led a praiseworthy life on account of his love of jus tice and friendship for
the Muslims. At the end of his life he became blind, but he c oncealed this from his
subjects and pretended that he could see. When something was put before him he
said: “This is good” or “This is bad.” His ministers deceived t he people by indicating
to the king in cryptic words what he should say, so that the commoners could not
understand. Basi was a maternal uncle of Tunka Manin. This is their custom and
their habit, that the kingship is inherited only by the son of t he king’s sister. He has
no doubt that his successor is a son of his sister, while he is not certain that his son
is in fact his own, and he is not convinced of the genuinenes s of his relationship to
him. This Tunka Manin is powerful, rules an enormous kingd om, and possesses great authority.

From N. Levtzion and J. F. P. Hopkins, eds., Corpus of Early Ar abic Sources for West

African History, trans. J. R. Hopkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 78–83, 85–87.

The city of Ghana consists of two towns situated on a plain. One of these towns,
which is inhabited by Muslims, is large and possesses twelve mosques, in one of
which they assemble for the Friday prayer. There are salaried imams and muezzins,
as well as jurists and scholars. In the environs are wells with sweet water, from
which they drink and with which they grow vegetables. The king's town is six miles
distant from this one and bears the name of Al-
Ghaba. Between these two towns
there are continuous habitations. The houses of the inhabitants are of stone and
acacia (sunt) wood. The king has a palace and a number of domed dwellings all
surrounded with an enclosure like a city wall (sur). In the king's town, and not far
from his court of justice, is a mosque where the Muslims who arrive at his court
(yafid 'alayh) pray. Around the king's town are domed buildings and groves and
thickets where the sorcerers of these people, men in charge of the religious cult, live.

In them too are their idols and the tombs of their kings. These woods are guarded
and none may enter them and know what is there. In them also are the king's
prisons. If somebody is imprisoned there no news of him is ever heard. The king's

prisons. If somebody is imprisoned there no news of him is e ver heard. The king’s
interpreters, the official in charge of his treasury and the ma jority of his ministers
are Muslims. Among the people who fol ow the king’s religio n only he and his heir
apparent (who is the son of his sister) may wear sewn clothe s. Al other people wear
robes of cotton, silk, or brocade, according to their means. A l of them shave their
beards, and women shave their heads. The king adorns him self like a woman

[wearing necklaces] round his neck and [bracelets] on his fo rearms, and he puts on
a high cap (tartur) decorated with gold and wrapped in a tur ban of fine cotton. He
sits in audience or to hear grievances against officials (maza lim) in a domed
pavilion around which stand ten horses covered with gold- embroidered materials.

Behind the king stand ten pages holding shields and swords decorated with gold, and
on his right are the sons of the [vassal] kings of his country wearing splendid
garments and their hair plaited with gold. The governor of th e city sits on the
ground before the king and around him are ministers seated likewise. At the door of
the pavilion are dogs of excel ent pedigree who hardly ever l eave the place where
the king is, guarding him. Round their necks they wear col a rs of gold and silver
studded with a number of bal s of the same metals. The aud ience is announced by

the beating of a drum which they cal duba, made from a lon g hol ow log. When the
people who profess the same religion as the king approach him they fal on their
knees and sprinkle dust on their heads, for this is their way of greeting him. As for
the Muslims, they greet him only by clapping their hands.

Their religion is paganism and the worship of idols (dakakir). When their king
dies they construct over the place where his tomb wil be an enormous dome of saj
wood. Then they bring him on a bed covered with a few carp ets and cushions and
place him beside the dome. At this side they place his orna ments, his weapons, and
the vessels from which he used to eat and drink, fil ed with various kinds of food
and beverages. They place there too the men who used to s erve his meals. They close
the door of the dome and cover it with mats and furnishings. Then the people
assemble, who heap earth upon it until it becomes like a big hil ock and dig a ditch
around it until the mound can be reached at only one place.

They make sacrifices to their dead and make offerings of int oxicating drinks. On every donkey-
load of salt when it is brought into the country their king levi es one
gold dinar, and two dinars when it is sent out. From a load of copper the king’s due
is five mithquals, and from a load of other goods ten mithqal s. The best gold found
in his land comes from the town over a country inhabited by tribes of the Sudan whose dwel ings are continuous.

The nuggets (nadra) found in al the mines of his country ar e reserved for the king, only this gold dust (al-tibr al-daqiq) being left for the people. But for this the people would accumulate gold until it lost its value. The nug gets may weigh from an ounce (uqiyya) to a pound (ratl). It is related that the king o wns a nugget as large as a big stone....

The king of Ghana, when he cal s up his army, can put 200,0 00 men into the field, more than 40,000 of them archers. The horses in Ghana are very smal . ... the inhabitants sow their crops twice yearly, the first time in the moist earth (thara) during the season of the Nil flood, and later in the earth [tha t has preserved its humidity].

West of Ghiyaru, on the Nil, is the town of Yarisna, inhabited by Muslims surrounded by polytheists. In Yarisna is a species of smal go at. When a goat gives birth to a male it is slaughtered, only females being al owed to live. In this country is a certain tree against which the goats rub themselves and become fecundated by

is a certain tree against which the goats rub themselves and become fecundated by the wood without the medium of the male. This fact is wel k nown to them; none of them deny it and it has been related by many trustworthy M uslims. From Yarisna the Sudan who speak an unintel igible language (a'jam pl. 'ujm) cal ed the Banu Naghmarata, who are merchants, export gold to other count ries....

Beyond this country lies another cal ed Malal, the king of wh ich is known as
almusulmani. He is thus cal ed because his country became afflicted with drought
one year fol owing another; the inhabitants prayed for rain, sacrificing cattle til
they had exterminated almost al of them, but the drought a nd the misery only
increased. The king had as his guest a Muslim who used to r ead the Koran and was
acquainted with the Sunna. To this man the king complained of the calamities that
assailed him and his people. The man said; “O King, if you b elieved in God (who is
exalted) and testified that He is One, and testified as to the prophetic mission of
Muhammad (God bless him and give him peace) and if you accepted al the religious
laws of Islam, I would pray for your deliverance from your pli ght and that God’s
mercy would envelop al the people of your country and that your enemies and
adversaries might envy you on that account.” Thus he conti nued to press the king
until the latter accepted Islam and became a sincere Muslim . The man made him
recite from the Koran some easy passages and taught him r eligious obligations and
practices which no one may be excused from knowing. Then the Muslim made him
wait til the eve of the fol owing Friday, when he ordered hi m to purify himself by a
complete ablution, and clothed him in a cotton garment whi ch he had. The two of
them came out towards a mound of earth, and there the Mu slim stood praying while

the king, standing at his right side, imitated him. Thus they prayed for part of the
night, the Muslim reciting invocations and the king saying “A men.” The dawn had
just started to break when God caused abundant rain to des cend upon them. So the
king ordered the idols to be broken and expel ed the sorcere rs from his country. He
and his descendants after him as wel as his nobles were sin cerely attached to Islam,
while the common people of the kingdom remained polythei sts. Since then their
rulers have been given the title of almusulmani.

Among the provinces (a’mal) of Ghana is a region cal ed Sa ma, the inhabitants of which are known as al-
Bukm. From that region to Ghana is four days’ traveling. The people there go naked; only the women cover their sexual p arts with strips of leather
which they plait. They leave the hair on the pubis and only s have their heads. Abu

‘Abd Al ah al-
Makki related that he saw one of these women stop in front of an
Arab, who had a long beard, and say something that he coul d not understand. He
asked the interpreter about the meaning of her words. He re plied that she wished
that she had hair like that of his beard on her pubis. The Ara b, fil ed with anger, cal ed down curses upon her.…

From Bughrat you go to Tiraqqa and from there across the d esert plain to
Tadmakka, which of al the towns of the world is the one tha t resembles Mecca the most. Its name means “the Mecca-

like.” It is a large town amidst mountains and ravines and is better built than Ghana or Kawkaw. The inhabitants of Tadmakka are Muslim Berbers who veil themselves as the Berbers of the desert do. They live on meat and milk as well as on grain which the earth produces without being tilled.

Sorghum and other grains are imported for them from the land of the Sudan. They wear clothes of cotton, nuli, and other robes dyed red. Their kings wears a red turban, yellow shirt, and blue trousers. Their dinars are called “bald” because they are of pure gold without any stamp. Their women are of perfect beauty, unequalled among people of any other country, but adultery is allowed among them. They fall upon any merchant [disputing as to] which of them shall take him to her house.…

When a traveler goes from the country of Kawkaw along the bank of the river in a westerly direction he reached the kingdom called Damdam, the people of which eat anyone who falls into their hands. They have a great king to whom minor rulers are subject. In their country there is a huge fortress surmounted by an idol (sanam) in the form of a woman which they worship as their God and to which they go on pilgrimage.

Between Tadamakka and the town of Kawkaw is a distance of nine stages. The Arabs call the inhabitants of the latter the BZRKANYYN. This town consists of two

towns, one being the residence of the king and the other inh abited by the Muslims.

The king is cal ed Qanda. The clothes of the people there ar e like those of the other
Sudan, consisting of a robe (milhafa) and a garment of skins or some other material,
according to each man’s individual means. They worship ido ls (dakakir) as do the
other Sudan. When their king sits down [to partake of a mea l] a drum is beaten, the
Sudanese women dance with their thick hair flowing, and no body in the town goes
about his business until he has finished his repast, the remn ants of which are thrown
into the Nile. At this [the couriers] shout out boisterously so that the people know
that the king has finished his meal. When the king ascends t he throne he is handed a
signet ring, a sword, and a copy of the Koran which, as they assert, were sent to
them by the Commander of the Faithful. Their king is a Musli m, for they entrust the kingship only to Muslims….

IBN BATTUTA

Ibn Battuta (1304–
1369) was a North African Arab who visited many African kingdoms during the fourteenth century. An indefatigable tr aveler, over a thirty-year
span he also visited many parts of Asia and islands in the In dian Ocean and proudly
wrote about his observations. His account obviously warrant s comparison with that of al-

Bakri, being a traveler’s vs. a scholar’s account but also a fo urteenth-vs. an eleventh-century account.

• • •

ANECDOTE CONCERNING THE MASSUFA WHO INHABIT IWAL ATAN

The conditions of these people is strange and their manners outlandish. As for their men, there is no sexual jealous in them. And none of them d erives his genealogy from his father but, on the contrary, from his maternal uncle . A man does not pass on inheritance except to the sons of his sister to the exclusio n of his own sons. Now that is a thing I never saw in any part of the world except in the country of the unbelievers of the land of Mulaibar [Malabar] among the Indi ans. As to the former

[the Massufa], they are Muslims keeping to the prayers, stud ying fiqh [Islamic jurisprudence], and learning the Koran by heart. With regard to their women, they are not modest in the presence of men, they do not veil the mselves in spite of their perseverance in the prayers. He who wishes to marry amon g them can marry, but the women do not travel with the husband, and if one of the m wanted to do that, she would be prevented by her family. The women there hav e friends and companions amongst men outside the prohibited degrees of marriage [other than brothers, fathers, etc.]. Likewise for the men, there are com

panions from amongst
women outside the prohibited degrees. One of them would e nter his house to find
his wife with her companion and would not disapprove of th at conduct....

From Said Hamdum and Noel King, eds., Ibn Battuta in Black Africa (London: Rex Col ings, 1975), 27–29, 36–39, 47–
48. Reprinted by permission of Markus Wiener

Col ings, 1975), 27–29, 36–39, 47–
48. Reprinted by permission of Markus Wiener
Publishers, Inc.

The sultan [emperor of Mali] has a raised cupola which is en tered from inside his
house. He sits in it a great part of the time. It has on the aud ience side a chamber
with three wooden arches, the woodwork is covered with sh eets of beaten silver and
beneath these, three more covered with beaten gold, or, rat her, it is silver covered
with gilt. The windows have woolen curtains which are raise d on a day when the
sultan wil be in session in his cupola: thus it is known that h e is holding a session.

When he sits, a silken cord is put out from the gril of one of the arches with a scarf
of Egyptian embroidery tied to it. When the people see the s carf, drums are beaten
and bugles sounded. Then from the door of the palace come out about three
hundred slaves. Some have bows in their hands and some s mal spears and shields.

Some of the spearmen stand on the right and some on the l
eft, the two bowmen sit
likewise. Then they bring two mares saddled and bridled, an
d with the two rams.

They say that these are effective against the evil eye. When
 the sultan has sat down
three of his slaves go out quickly to cal his deputy, Qanja M
usa. The farariyya

[commanders] arrive, and they are the amirs [officers], and
among them are the
preacher and the men of fiqh, who sit in front of the armed
men on the right and
left of the place of audience. The interpreter Dugha stands a
t the door of the
audience chamber wearing splendid robes of zardkhuana [of
ficial] and others. On
his head is a turban which has fringes, they have a superb w
ay of tying a turban. He
is girt with a sword whose sheath is of gold, on his feet are li
ght boots and spurs.

And nobody wears boots that day except he. In his hands th
ere are two smal spears,
one of gold and one of silver with points of iron. The soldiers
, the district governors,
the pages and the Massufa and others are seated outside th
e place of audience in a
broad street which has trees in it. Each farari [commander]
has his fol owers before
him with their spears, bows, drums and bugles made of elep
hant tusks. Their
instruments of music are made of reeds and calabashes, an
d they beat them with
sticks and produce a wonderful sound. Each farari has a qui

ver which is placed
between his shoulders. He holds his bow in his hand and is mounted on a mare.

Some of his men are on foot and some on mounts.

Inside the audience chamber under the arches a man is stan ding; he who wants to
spead to the sultan speaks to Dugha, Dugha speaks to the man who is standing, and he speaks to the sultan.

An Account of the Session in the Place of Audience
The sultan sits on certain days in the palace yard to give au dience. There is a
platform under a tree steps which they cal banbi. It is cover ed with silk and has
pil ows placed on it. The shatr [umbrel a] is raised, this is a s helter made of silk with
a golden bird like a sparrowhawk above it. The sultan comes out from a gate in the
corner of the palace, bow in hand, his quiver between his sh oulders, and on his head
a cap of gold tied with a golden band which has fringes like t hin-bladed knives more
than a span long. He often wears a robe which is soft and re d, made from Roman
cloth … mutanfas. The singers go out before him carrying go ld and silver qanabir

[guitars] and behind him come three hundred armed armed slaves. The sultan walks
slowly and pauses often and sometimes he stops completely . When he comes to the
banbi he stops and looks at the people. Then he mounts the steps with dignity in the
manner of a preacher getting into the pulpit. When he sits d

own they beat the
drums, blow the bugles and the horns, and three of the slav es go out in haste and
cal the deputy and the farariyya [commanders]. They enter and sit down. The two
mares are brought in with the two rams. Damugha stands at the door while the rest
of the people are in the street under the tree. The blacks are the most humble of men

of the people are in the street under the tree. The blacks are the most humble of men
before their king and the most extreme in their self-abasement before him. They
swear by his name, saying ‘Mansa Sulaimanki’ [the law of M ansa Sulaimanki]. When
he cal s one of them while he is in session in his cupola whic h we described above,
the man invited takes off his clothes and wears patched clot hes, takes off his turban,
puts on a dirty cap, and goes in raising his clothes and trous ers up his legs halfway
to his knees. He advances with humility looking like a begga r. He hits the ground
with his elbows, he hits it hard. He stands bowed, like one in the ruku’ position in
prayer, listening to what the king says. When one of them s peaks to the sultan and
gives him an answer, he removed his clothes from his back and throw dust on his
head and back, as a person does when bathing with water. I used to wonder how
they do not blind their eyes. When the sultan speaks in his c ouncil, at his word those
present take their turbans off their heads and listen to the s peech….

Amongst their good qualities is the smal amount of injustice amongst them, for
of al people they are the furthest from it. Their sultan does not forgive anyone in
any matter to do with justice. Among these qualities there is also the prevalence of
peace in their country, the traveler is not afraid in it nor is h e who lives there in fear
of the thief or of the robber by violence. They do not interfer e with the property of
the white man who dies in their country even though it may consist of great wealth,
but rather they entrust it to the hand of someone dependabl e among the white men
until it is taken by the rightful claimant.

Another of the good habits amongst them is the way they m eticulously observe
the times of the prayers and attendance at them, so also it i s with regard to their
congregational services and their beating of their children to instil these things in them.

When it is Friday, if a man does not come early to the mosq ue he wil not find a
place to pray because of the numbers of the crowd. It is thei r custom for every man
to send his boy with his prayer mat. He spreads it for him in a place commensurate
with his position and keeps the place until he comes to the mosque. Their prayer
mats are made of the leaves of a tree like a date palm but it bears no fruit.

Among their good qualities is their putting on of good white clothes on Friday. If

a man among them has nothing except a tattered shirt, he washes and cleans it and
attends the Friday prayer in it. Another of their good qualities is their concern for
learning the sublime Koran by heart. They make fetters for their children when they
appear on their part to be fal ing short in their learning of it by heart, and they are
not taken off from them until they do learn by heart. I went in to visit the qadi on
an ‘Id day and his children were tied up. I said to him ‘Why do you not release
them?’ He said, ‘I shal not do so until they learn the Koran by heart.’ One day I
passed by a handsome youth from them dressed in fine clothes and on his feet was a
heavy chain. I said to the man who was with me, ‘What has this youth done—has he
killed someone?’ The youth heard my remark and laughed. It was told me, ‘He has
been chained so that he wil learn the Koran by heart.’

Among the bad things which they do—
their serving women, slave women and
little daughters appear before people naked, exposing their private parts. I used to
see many of them in this state in Ramadan, for it was the custom of the farariyya

[commanders] to break the fast in the sultan’s house. Every one of them has his food
carried into him by twenty or more of his slave girls and they are naked, every one.

Also among their bad customs is the way women wil go into the presence of the

sultan naked, with out any covering; and the nakedness of t
he sultan’s daughters—

on the night of the twenty-
seventh of Ramadan, I saw about a hundred slave girls

on the night of the twenty-
seventh of Ramadan, I saw about a hundred slave girls
coming out of his palace with food, with them were two of hi
s daughters, they had
ful breasts and no clothes on. Another of their bad customs
is their putting of dust
and ashes on their heads as assign of respect. And another i
s the laughing matter I
mentioned of their poetic recitals. And another is that many
of them eat animals not
ritual y slaughtered, and dogs and donkeys.

AFRICA THROUGH THE EYES OF A EUROPEAN MERCHANT

ANTONIUS MALFANTE

Antonius Malfante wrote from Tuat (Tawat) in the central Sah
ara in 1447, to a
col eague in Genoa. His travels suggest growing European o
utreach, for contact with
Africa below the Sahara had been limited since the fal of th
e Roman Empire. Genoa
was increasingly active in Mediterranean trade, and presum
ably Malfante’s venture
was part of this activity, as his account itself implies. He see
ms to have traveled
fairly widely in the region and was also eager to report what
he thought he learned about places he did not visit directly.

From The Voyages of Cadamosto and Other Documents on
Western Africa in the

Second Half of the fifteenth Century, trans. and edited by G. R. Crone, Hakluyt Society Works Ser II: Vol 80, 1937, 85–90. The Hakluyt Society was established in 1846 for the purpose of printing rare or unpublished Voyages and Travels. For further information please see their website at: www.hakluyt.com. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

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After we had come from the sea, we journeyed on horseback, always southwards, for about twelve days. For seven days we encountered no dwelling—nothing but sandy plains; we proceeded as though at sea, guided by the sun during the day, at night by the stars. At the end of the seventh day, we arrived at an oasis, where dwelt very poor people who supported themselves on water and a little sandy ground. They sow little, living upon the numerous date palms. At this [oasis] we had come into Tueto

[Tawat, a group of oases]. In this place there are eighteen quarters, enclosed within one wal , and ruled by an oligarchy. Each ruler of a quarter protects his fol owers, whether they be in the right or no. The quarters closely adjoin each other and are jealous of their privileges. Everyone arriving here places himself under the protection of one of these rulers, who wil protect him to the death: thus merchants enjoy very great security, much greater, in my opinion, than in other North African kingdoms such as Tunis.

Though I am a Christian, no one ever addressed an insulting word to me. They said they had never seen a Christian before. It is true that on my first arrival they were scornful of me, because they all wished to see me, saying with wonder “This Christian has a countenance like ours”— for they believed that Christians had disguised faces. Their curiosity was soon satisfied, and now I can go alone anywhere, with no one to say an evil word to me.

There are many Jews, who lead a good life here, for they are under the protection of the several rulers, each of whom defends his own clients. Thus they enjoy very secure social standing. Trade is in their hands, and many of them are to be trusted with the greatest confidence.

This locality is a mart of the country of the African Muslims, to which merchants come to sell their goods: gold is carried hither, and bought by those who come up from the coast. There are many rich men here. The generality, however, are very

from the coast. There are many rich men here. The generality, however, are very poor, for they do not sow, nor do they harvest anything, save the dates upon which they subsist. They eat no meat but that of castrated camels, which are scarce and very dear.

It is true that the Arabs with whom I came from the coast brought with them corn and barley which they sell throughout the year.

It never rains here: if it did, the houses, being built of salt in the place of reeds,
would be destroyed. It is scarcely ever cold here: in summer the heat is extreme,
wherefore they are almost al blacks. The children of both sexes go naked up to the
age of fifteen. These people observe the religion and law of Muhammad. In the vicinity there are 150 to 200 oases.

In the lands of the Blacks, as wel as here, dwel the Tuareg, who live, like the
Arabs, in tents. They are without number, and hold sway over the land from the
borders of Egypt to the shores of the Ocean [present-day Liberia], and over al the
neighboring towns of the blacks. They are fair, strong in body and very handsome in
appearance. They ride without stirrups, with simple spurs. They are governed by
kings, whose heirs are the sons of their sisters—
for such is their law. They keep their
mouths and noses covered. I have seen many of them here, and have asked them
through an interpreter why they cover their mouths and noses thus. They replied:

“We have inherited this custom from our ancestors.” Their faith is that of the Blacks.

Their sustenance is milk and flesh, no corn or barley, but much rice. Their sheep,
cattle, and camels are without number. One breed of camel, white as snow, can
cover in one day a distance which would take a horseman four days to travel. Great

warriors, these people are continual y at war amongst them selves.

The states which are under their rule border upon the land o f the Blacks. I shal
speak of those known to men here, and which have inhabita nts of the faith of
Muhammad. In al , the great majority are Blacks, but there a re a smal number of white [i.e. tawny Moors]....

These adhere to the law of Muhammad.

To the south of these are innumerable great cities and territ ories, the inhabitants
of which are al blacks and idolaters, continual y at war with each other in defense
of their law and faith of their idols. Some worship the sun, ot hers the moon, the
seven planets, fire, or water; others a mirror which reflects t heir faces, which they
take to be the images of gods; others groves of trees, the se ats of a spirit to whom
they make sacrifice; others again, statues of wood and ston e, with which, they say,
they commune by incantations. They relate here extraordina ry things of this people.

The lord in whose protection I am, here, who is the greatest in this land, having a
fortune of more than 100,000 doubles [a coin], a man worth y of credence, relates
that he lived for thirty years in that town, and, as he says, fo r fourteen years in the
land of the Blacks. Every day he tel s me wonderful things of these peoples. He says
that these lands and peoples extend endlessly to the south:

they al go naked, save
for a smal loincloth to cover their privates. They have an ab
undance of flesh, milk, and rice, but no corn or barley.

The slaves which the blacks take in their internecine wars ar
e sold at a very low
price. These peoples, who cover the land in multitudes, are i
n carnal acts like the
beasts. They breed greatly, for a woman bears up to five at
a birth. Nor can it be
doubted that they are eaters of human flesh, for many peopl
e have gone hence into
their country. Neither are there ever epidemics.

When the blacks catch sight of a white man from a distance,
 they take to flight as

When the blacks catch sight of a white man from a distance,
 they take to flight as
though from a monster, believing him to be a phantom. The
y are unlettered, and
without books. They are great magicians, evoking by incens
e diabolical spirits, with
whom, they say, they perform marvels.

The wares for which there is demand here are many: but the
 principal articles are
copper, and salt in slabs, bars and cakes. The copper of Rom
ania [the Byzantine
Empire], which is obtained through Alexandria, is always in
great demand
throughout the land of the Blacks. I frequently enquired wha
t they did with it, but
no one could give me a definite answer. I believe it is that th
ere are so many peoples
that there is almost nothing but is of use to them.

The Egyptian merchants come to trade in the land of the Bla
ck with half a mil ion head of cattle and camels—
a figure which is not fantastic in this region.

The place where I am is good for trade, as the Egyptians an
d other merchants
come hither form the land of the Blacks bringing gold, which
 they exchange for
copper and other goods. Thus everything sel s wel ; until the
re is nothing left for
sale. The people here wil neither sel nor buy unless at a pr
ofit of one hundred per
cent. For this reason, I have lost on the goods I brought here
, two thousand doubles.

From what I can understand, these people neighbor on India
. Indian merchants
come hither, and converse through interpreters. These India
ns are Christians, adorers
of the cross. It is said that in the land of the Blacks there are
 forty dialects, so that
they are unable to understand each other.

I often enquired where the gold was found and col ected; my
 patron always
replied “I was fourteen years in the land of the Blacks, and I
have never heard nor
seen anyone who could reply from definite knowledge. That
is my experience, as to
how it is found and col ected. What appears plain is that it c
omes from a distant
land, and, as I believe, from a definite zone.” He also said th
at he had been in places
where silver was as valuable as gold.

CHAPTER 15

CHINESE AND PORTUGUESE VOYAGES IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

One of the last great sets of events of the postclassical period involved the several Chinese voyages through the Indian ocean between 1405 and 1433, under the new Ming dynasty. One of the first great events of the next, early modern period was the voyage of the Portuguese Vasco da Gama around Africa to India. Documents in this chapter compare two Chinese trips, the last one launched in 1430, and da Gama's historic venture.

These were very different expeditions, from very different countries. Accounts of the two voyages clearly allow comparisons of the scopes and some of the motivations involved. Historians continue to debate exactly what the Chinese expeditions were all about—like the Portuguese, they were directly authorized by the ruler—but the sources suggest several of the factors involved. At the same time it is valid to look for similarities as well: after all, these were major expeditions, and it is important to ask why they occurred so close together in time, reaching some of the same places (notably East Africa, the port of Hormuz in the Middle East, and the southwest Indian port of Calicut).

The sources merit assessment as well in terms of possible bias. There is little documentation about the Chinese trips, which were ended in 1433 amid court disfavor, but the artisan who wrote the documents included

here surely wanted
some credit, if not for himself at least for the expedition as a whole. Vasco da
Gama's account was intended for his royal sponsors and oth er possible supporters back home.

The two series had very different outcomes. China's venture was exceptional y
ambitious and in many ways successful, but the fact that it was not continued, as
China found other ways to profit from interregional trade, li mits its ongoing
significance in world history. Historians often, in fact, spend more time discussing
why the trips stopped than they do discussing the voyages t hemselves. Da Gama's
venture, later repeated with more firepower, launched a maj or Portuguese
commitment to oceanic trade and colonization in the Indian Ocean and elsewhere,
which in turn was part of Western Europe's commercial surg e in the early modern centuries.

Questions

1. What were the main motives of the two expeditions? How do they compare?

2. What do the accounts suggest about the nature of the expeditions—their scope and power? What kinds of receptions did the expeditions receive (at least, according to the authors) and how do these compare?

3. What kinds of attitudes toward foreigners did the Chinese and the Portuguese display?

4. Why was there such great interest in the Indian Ocean?

5. What were the motives of people who wrote expedition accounts at this point in history? What kinds of distortions might result?

6. What do the documents suggest about the significance of the two expeditions?

For Further Discussion

1. Why was there new interest in ocean-based commerce in the fifteenth century?

What kinds of technologies were involved?

2. Why did China judge that it was sensible to stop its expeditions, whereas Portugal pressed ahead as long as possible?

3. Why were foreign expeditions often wel received?

4. How do these expeditions compare with earlier patterns of interregional trade in Africa-Asia-Europe?

MA HUAN

Ma Huan was a woodcutter who probably went on several tri ps with the great admiral Cheng Ho. The first selection is a poem that he may have written. It appeared in a novel by Lo Mou-teng, written in 1597, which was a very fanciful account; but some historians believe it was actual y written i n 1416, about an expedition that took place 1413–1415. The second selection refers to the 1430 trip, in an account cal ed The Overal Survey of the Ocean's Shor es, which Ma Huan wrote in 1433.

• • •

The Poem

The Emporer's glorious envoy [Cheng Ho] received the divin e commands,

'proclaim abroad the silken sounds, and go to the barbarous lands.'

His giant ship on the roaring waves of the boundless ocean r ode; afar, o'er the rol ing bil ows vast and limitless, it strode.

The vast sea's rol ing bil ows in lovely breakers sweep; … Ja va [Indonesia] he quickly makes.

From the Central Glorious Country Java is distant far,
a noisome steam is heaven's breath, and strange the people are.

With unkempt heads and naked feet, a barbarous tongue th ey speak;
dresses and hats they use not, nor manners nor virtue seek.

Here when the heavenly writing [the emperor’s commands] came, a happy clamour meeting,

Chieftains and heads of the barbarous tribes al vied to give it greeting.

Tribute of southern gold, rare gems, from distant parts appe ar;
The shipmen lifted up their heads; the west with the east th ey mixed;
only pointing to the [Polaris] star whereby north and south w ere fixed.

Mountains high and mighty waves I ere then saw but few;
Unwonted gems and jewels rare I now began to view.

Above to heaven and down to earth I looked—
no boundary ran;
To heaven’s ends and earth’s extremes each one is the sove reign’s man.

Union under imperial Ming our grand and great land shares;
from time forgotten until now no [other land] compares.

The Emperor’s envoy, dutiful, fears to tarry and delay;

just then he meets the south wind, which points to his home ward way.

O’er waves like swimming dragons huge [the envoy’s] vesse l rides;
he turns his head back, mist and fog the distant desert hide s.

To capital returned, the Palace levee he attended;
in Dragon Court his tribute, every precious thing extended.

One glance of the al -
wise eyes [the court advisors], and joy fil ed Heaven's face

[the emperor],

al dignities, gifts, were bestowed, new pledges of Heaven's grace.

Ma Huan, the mountain-woodcutter of Kuei chi.

• • •

The Overal Survey of the Ocean's Shores

This country of Mecca setting sail from the country of Calicu t, you proceed towards the southwest—
the point shen on the compass; the ship travels for three mo ons, and
then reaches the jetty of this country. They profess the Musli m religion. A holy man
first expounded and spread this forth....

From Ma Huan, Ying-yai Sheng-
lan (The Overal Survey of the Ocena's Shores),
trans. J. V. G. Mil s (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 73–75.

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Inside the wal [of the mosque], at the four corners, are built four towers; at every
service of worship they ascend these towers, cal to the com pany, and chant the
ceremonial. On both sides, left and right, are the hal s where al the patriarchs have

preached the doctrine; these, too, are built with layers of sto ne, and are decorated most beautiful y.…

[1430] An order was respectful y received from our imperial court that the
principle envoy the grand eunuch Chen Ho and others shoul d go to al the foreign
countries to read out the imperial commands and to bestow rewards.

When a division of the fleet reached the country of Calicut, [the chief officer]

selected an interpreter and others, seven men in al , and se nt them with a load of
musk, porcelain articles, and other such things; [and] they j oined a ship of this
country [Calicut] and went there. It took them one year to re turn to China.

They bought al kinds of unusual commodities, and rare valu ables, lions, ‘camel-
fowls,’ and other such things; in addition they painted an ac curate representation of
the ‘Heavenly Hal ,’ [and] they returned to the Chinese capit al.

The king of the country of Mecca also sent envoys who brou ght some local articles, accompanied the seven men—
the interpreter [and others]—who had
original y gone there, and presented the articles to the court .

VASCO DA GAMA

Vasco da Gama was the first European to round Africa and r each India, after many earlier fifteenth-

century trips had crawled ever further down the west Africa
n coast.

He reached present-
day South Africa in 1497, India a year later. He was able to profit sufficiently from this first trip to interest Portugal in fur
ther efforts; a later,
second trip involved more abundant military preparation an
d use of cannon to intimidate Indian rulers and merchants.

• • •

VASCO DA GAMA: ROUND AFRICA TO INDIA, 1497–1498 C.E.

The inhabitants of this country are tawny-
colored. Their food is confined to the flesh
of seals, whales and gazel es, and the roots of herbs. They a
re dressed in skins, and
wear sheaths over their virile members. They are armed wit
h poles of olive wood to
which a horn, browned in the fire, is attached. Their numero
us dogs resemble those
of Portugal, and bark like them. The birds of the country like
wise, are the same as in
Portugal, and include cormorants, gul s, turtle doves, creste
d larks, and many others.

The climate is healthy and temperate, and produces good h
erbage. On the day after
we had cast anchor, that is to say on Thursday (November 9
) we landed with the captain-
major [da Gama referred to himself in the third person], and
 made captive
one of the natives, who was smal of stature. This man had been gathering honey in
the sandy waste, for in this country the bees deposit their h

oney at the foot of the
mounds around the bushes. He was taken on board the capt ain-major’s ship, and
being placed at table he ate of al we ate. On the fol owing d ay the captain-major had him wel dressed and sent ashore.

From Oliver Thatcher, ed., The Library of Original Sources, v ol. 1 (Milwaukee, Wis.:
University Research Extension Co.l, 1907), 26–
40, scanned by J. S. Arkenberg of
California State University Ful erton, who modernized the te xt.

On the fol owing day (November 10) fourteen or fifteen nati ves came to where our ship lay. The captain-
major landed and showed them a variety of merchandise, wi th
the view of finding out whether such things were to be foun d in their country. This
merchandise included cinnamon, cloves, seed-
pearls, gold, and many other things,
but it was evident that they had no knowledge whatsoever o f such articles, and they
were consequently given round bel s and tin rings.

On that day Fernaro Vel oso, who was with the captain-major, expressed a great
desire to be permitted to accompany the natives to their ho uses, so that he might
find out how they lived and what they ate. After a meal they expressed a desire that
he should not accompany them any further, but return to th e vessels. When Fernao
Vel oso came abreast of the vessels he began to shout, the negroes keeping in the bush.

We were stil at supper; but when his shouts were heard the captain-major rose at
once, and so did we others, and we entered a sailing boat. T he negroes then began
running along the beach, and they came as quickly up with Fernao Vel oso as we
did, and when we endeavored to get him into the boat they threw their assegais, and wounded the captain-
major and three or four others. Al this happened because w e
looked upon these people as men of little spirit, quite incapa ble of violence, and had
therefore landed without first arming ourselves. We then ret urned to the ships.

1498. Calicut [Arrival.] That night (May 20) we anchored two leagues from the city
of Calicut, and we did so because our pilot mistook Capna, a town at that place, for
Calicut. Stil further there is another town cal ed Pandarani. We anchored about a
league and a half from the shore. After we were at anchor, f our boats (almadias)
approached us from the land, who asked of what nation we were. We told them, and they then pointed out Calicut to us.

The city of Calicut is inhabited by Christians. [The first voya gers to Indian mistook
the Hindus for Christians.] They are of tawny complexion. So me of them have big
beards and long hair, whilst others clip their hair short or sh ave the head, merely
al owing a tuft to remain on the crown as a sign that they ar e Christians. They also

al owing a tuft to remain on the crown as a sign that they ar
e Christians. They also
wear moustaches. They pierce the ears and wear much gold
in them. They go naked
down to the waist, covering their lower extremities with very
fine cotton stuffs. But
it is only the most respectable who do this, for the others m
anage as best they are
able. The women of this country, as a rule, are ugly and of s
mal stature. They wear
many jewels of gold round the neck, numerous bracelets on
their arms, and rings set
with precious stones on their toes. Al these people are wel -
disposed and apparently
of mild temper. At first sight they seem covetous and ignora
nt.

When we arrived at Calicut the king was fifteen leagues awa
y. The captain-major
sent two men to him with a message, informing him that an
ambassador had arrived
from the King of Portugal with letters, and that if he desired i
t he would take them
to where the king then was. The king presented the bearers
of this message with
much fine cloth. He sent word to the captain-
major bidding him welcome, saying
that he was about to proceed to Calicut. As a matter of fact,
he started at once with
a large retinue. At this time we were actual y in front of the
city of Calicut. We were
told that the anchorage at the place to which we were to go
was good, whilst at the
place we were then it was bad, with a stony bottom, which
was quite true; and,
moreover, that it was customary for the ships which came t

o this country to anchor
there for the sake of safety. We ourselves did not feel comfo
rtable, and the captain-
major had no sooner received this royal message than he or
dered the sails to be set,
and we departed. We did not, however, anchor as near the s
hore as the king’s pilot desired.

PART III

The Early Modern Period, 1450–1750

BEGINNING IN THE MID–
FIFTEENTH CENTURY, several new themes began to shape t
he larger
patterns of world history, compel ing al major civilizations t
o come to terms with
some unexpected forces. The world did not become more ho
mogeneous as a result,
because different regions reacted quite differently to the co
mmon themes. But every
society was altered in the process. New technologies, partic
ularly guns and improved
navigational devices, changed world politics and trade. West
ern Europe expanded its
commercial role and created new empires. The Europeans e
agerly sought new
prospects, and internal rivalries pushed individual states to
seek colonies.

The rise of Western power soon brought Europe into contact
with the Americas.

Exploitation of American resources and the establishment of
 colonies propel ed the
Americas into international contacts for the first time since t

he arrival of people
from Asia many mil ennia before. European control and also European diseases and
animals now came to the Americas; and American crops suc h as corn and potatoes
were taken to many other parts of the world, encouraging ra pid population growth
from China to Europe itself. American trade stimulated world commerce. Europe,
particularly, began to increase its manufacturing sector, whi le relying on fairly traditional technologies and home- and shop-based production. It traded these
finished goods for raw materials, precious metals, and spice s from other parts of the
world. Europe also managed to dominate most ocean- going trade, setting up huge
commercial companies that provided another source of profi ts. Asian producers also
benefited; China gained much of the American silver, which the Europeans used to pay for silks and porcelain.

The intensifying commercial contacts around the world creat ed a new set of
international inequalities. Some areas, such as Latin Americ a, produced cheap
materials for export, depending on forced labor and lacking a large merchant class.

They became heavily dependent on European trade initiativ es. Africa, though not
colonized like Latin America, was brought into this system th rough the slave trade;
mil ions of Africans were conscripted by African merchants a nd government agents
and sold to Europeans for transport to the Americas. Indone sia was drawn in,

through trade for spices and then because of Dutch-run colonies and estate agriculture. India became open to growing European penetration by the eighteenth century.

European gains, the inclusion of the Americas, and the formation of a more intensive international economy were not the only themes of the period. A new set of land-based empires formed, aided by the use of gunpowder and cannons. In the most dramatic change, the Turkish-led Ottoman Empire covered a large part of the Middle East, Egypt, and southeastern Europe; it replaced the loosening Arab political control and pushed back Christianity in the northern part of the region. The fal of Constantinople in 1453 essential y completed the conquest of the Christian Byzantine Empire. India experienced a new, Muslim-led Mughal Empire that dominated the Hindu majority during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Russian Empire began its expansion into central and eastern Asia and further into Eastern Europe. Some of these empires, along with the more traditional Chinese Empire, began to weaken somewhat toward the end of the early modern period, but their power, political hold, and internal cultural impact shaped the regions involved for several centuries. This was also a period of dramatic innovation in Japan, under

for several centuries. This was also a period of dramatic innovation in Japan, under the Tokugawa shogunate, a kind of feudal monarchy.

The early modern period saw no sweeping cultural changes of international scope.

Islamic gains continued in parts of Asia. Christianity advanced particularly in the Americas, on the heels of European conquest. Confucianism gained ground in Japan, along with an extensive educational system. In Western Europe, a more scientific outlook accompanied massive discoveries in physics and biology; only in the eighteenth century, however, was this new intellectual framework exported, haltingly, to places like Russia and the British colonies of North America.

Comparative analysis unquestionably helps focus key issues in understanding world history in the early modern period. Comparisons in this chapter focus on four basic developments in the early modern period; first, contacts among peoples that had known each other little if at all previously, as global relationships were shaken up particularly by the new European sea power; second, the installation of new or vastly intensified labor systems to deal with problems of controlling workers and producing goods often central to the growing world trade; third, the expansion of land empires (which involved much continuity in China but important new developments in the Ottoman Empire and Russia); and finally, outright interaction with Western Europe, both by peoples now part of European colonies and by

societies independent but exposed to new or potential influe nces.

CHAPTER 16

EUROPEANS AND AMERICAN INDIANS

Explorers, Conquerors, and Aztec Reactions

The encounter between European explorers and settlers and Native Americans was
one of the most fascinating and, from the Indian standpoint, tragic, in world history.

Europeans came with technologies, animals, diseases, and r eligious views for which
the Indians had no prior preparation. Some Indians proved q uite adaptable to the
context that European arrival established, gaining skil with horses, learning new
political forms, and so on. Overal , however, Europeans brou ght greater force,
devastating diseases, and an attitude of superiority that wo uld combine to severely restrict Indian life.

Comparisons in this chapter involve an unusual, highly signif icant case of
encounter, but also the interactions that developed key feat ures of the Columbian
exchange. Early European arrivals, such as Columbus himsel f, often focused on the
naïveté and timidity of the Indians they encountered, wonde ring at their nakedness
and lack of metals and weapons but confident that they coul d proceed in friendship.

Columbus’s report on the 1492 voyage to the Caribbean islands shows this early openness, but also the menace that underlay it: “I have also established the greatest friendship with the king of that country, so much so that he took pride in calling me his brother, and treating me as such. Even should these people change their intentions towards us and become hostile, they do not know what arms are, but, as I have said, go naked, and are the most timid people in the world; so that the men I have left could, alone, destroy the whole country.”

Later accounts changed, and terms like deceitful and lazy, as well as pagan, began to be applied to Indians. The following European accounts come from Diego Alvarez Chanca, a surgeon on Columbus’s 1493 return to the Caribbean, who later published a somewhat “ethnographic,” if hostile, account in his hometown of Seville, Spain; from Hernando Cortés, in letters to the Spanish government as he began the conquest of Mexico in 1519; and from the French explorer Champlain, in a diary kept as he traveled the coasts of Maine and Cape Code in the early seventeenth century.

The nature of the sources varies. Champlain and Chanca wrote accounts for general interest; Cortés was reporting to the Spanish royalty. Which kind of account is more accurate, less likely to exaggerate?

What of the Indian views implied in the European accounts? Why does their outlook toward different Europeans vary—-or does it? Why did Europeans pick up
different signals about Indian reactions to the first presentati ons of Christianity?

There are few direct accounts of initial Indian responses, so i t is important to
speculate on the basis of European descriptions of varying b ehaviors. Also, is there
any sign of a distinction, in dealing with Europeans, between the Indians of New
England or the Caribbean islands, who combined agriculture and hunting, and the
Indians in that part of Mexico long embraced in the elaborat e civilizations of the
Aztecs and Mayans, whom Cortés first encountered?

Final y, there is the reaction from the Indians themselves. Th e Aztec Empire,
founded in the fourteenth century and building on earlier civ ilizations in the region,
was the key political power in Mexico and much of Central A merica. A set of Aztec

was the key political power in Mexico and much of Central A merica. A set of Aztec
accounts provides an unusual insight into initial contacts fro m the Indian side—

interestingly, the comments refer to the same first encounte rs that the Cortés
account deals with. The ruler of the vast Aztec empire, Mont ezuma (Motecuhzoma
in the Aztec account), sent a mission to contact Cortés, and the results are

documented in this passage, along with later observations about some of the biological impact of the Spanish arrival. Aztec response reflected among other things an old belief in a beneficent civilizer-god, Quetzalcoatl, who would return from the east in a particular type of year in the Aztec calendar, which 1519

happened to be. With this document, one set of Indian perceptions of Europeans can be directly compared with European reactions to the Indians; the same document suggests the complex mix of factors that explain why the Indian response combined resistance with various kinds of accommodation.

Questions

1. What were the dominant attitudes of the Europeans? Why did they feel justified in killing Indians? Were there also “good” Indians, and how were they defined?

2. Why do the accounts of Cortés and Chanca differ? Who were their audiences, and how might this factor have affected their emphases?

3. Which of the three European accounts was most optimistic about possibilities of dealing with the Indians, and why?

4. What did the Europeans believe Indian reactions to their arrival were?

5. Which looms larger in the European accounts: religious motivations or greed? Do the European accounts suggest an early form of racism?

6. How did Cortés treat Indians in Mexico? What were his basic assumptions?

7. Why did some Indians fight and others not? Why did the Aztecs not simply resist European intrusion in every possible way?

8. What suggestions does the Aztec account offer as to why Spanish conquest succeeded?

9. How do the Aztec account and the comments of Cortés compare? How do the two groups evaluate the religious factor? Which side was more aggressive? Which side

had more deeply rooted assumptions of superiority, and wh
y?

For Further Discussion

1. Why were smal numbers of Europeans able to conquer th
e numerous, often wel -

organized American peoples?

2. Were European incursions into the Americas one of the gr
eat tragedies of world history?

3. Why might hunting-and-
gathering Indians be harder for Europeans to deal with
than those in the civilizations of the Aztecs and the Incas?

SPANISH REACTIONS: CHANCA AND CORTÉS

Dr. Chanca’s comments on Indians came from his experienc
e with the second
Columbus expedition of 1493, which visited various Caribbe
an islands. Dr. Chanca
was interested in titil ating his Spanish readership. Hernand
o Cortés (1485–1547)
reported to the Spanish royal government from 1519 onwar
d. He had been assigned
an official expedition to Mexico and was able to converse wit
h Indian
representatives through his two interpreters, one a Spaniard
 previously abandoned in
the Yucatan, one an Indian woman. Cortés used a combinati
on of al iances with

the Yucatan, one an Indian woman. Cortés used a combinati
on of al iances with

dissident Indian groups and outright fighting to defeat the A ztecs by 1521.

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DR. DIEGO ALVAREZ CHANCA ON THE CARIBE INDIANS

The way of life of these caribe people is bestial. There are th ree islands, this one is
cal ed Turuqueira, the other, which we saw first, is cal ed Ce yre, and the third is
cal ed Ayai. They are al agreed, as if they were of one linea ge, doing no harm to
each other. Al together they make war on al the other neig hbouring islands, going
150 leagues by sea to make raids in the many canoes which they have, which are
smal ‘fustas’ made of a single piece of wood. Their arms ar e arrows rather than iron
weapons, because they do not possess any iron: they fix on points made of tortoise-
shel , others from another island fix on fish bones which are jagged, being like that
natural y, like very strong saws, a thing which, for an unarm ed people, as they al
are, can kil and do great injury, but for people of our nation are not arms greatly to be feared.

From Peter Hulme and Noel Whitehead, eds., Wild Majesty: E ncounters with Caribes
from Columbia to the Present Day (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 13–14.

These people raid the other islands and carry off the women whom they can take,
especial y the young and beautiful ones, whom they keep to

serve them and have
them as concubines, and they carry off so many that in fifty houses nobody was
found, and of the captives more than twenty were young girls. These women also
say that they are treated with a cruelty which seems incredible, for sons whom they
have from them are eaten and they only rear those whom they have from their
native women. The men whom they are able to take, those who are alive they bring
to their houses to butcher for meat, and those who are dead are eaten there and
then. They say that men's flesh is so good that there is nothing like it in the world,
and it certainly seems so for the bones which we found in these houses had been
gnawed of everything they could gnaw, so that nothing was left on them except
what was much too tough to be eaten. In one house there a man's neck was found
cooking in a pot. They cut off the male member of the boys they take prisoner and
make use of them until they are men, and then when they want to make a feast, they
kil and eat them, for they say that the flesh of boys and of women is not good to
eat. Of these boys, three came fleeing to us, and al three had had their members cut off.

CORTÉS IN MEXICO

H. Cortés accordingly left Cuba and began his voyage with ten ships and four
hundred fighting men, among whom were many knights and gentlemen, seventeen

being mounted. The first land they touched was the Island o
f Cozumel, now cal ed
Santa Cruz, as we mentioned, and on landing at the part of
San Juan de Portalatina
the town was found entirely deserted, as if it had never bee
n inhabited. Cortés
wishing to know the cause of such a flight ordered the men t
o disembark and took
up his abode in the town. It was not long before he learnt fro
m three Indians
captured in a canoe as they were making for the mainland o
f Yucatán that the chiefs
of the Island at the sight of the Spanish ships approaching h
ad left the town and
retired with al the Indians to the woods and hil s, being very
 afraid of the Spaniards
as not knowing what their intentions might be. Cortés, replyi
ng by means of the
native interpreter whom he had with him, informed them he
 was going to do them
no harm but admonish them and bring them to the knowled
ge of our Holy Catholic

no harm but admonish them and bring them to the knowled
ge of our Holy Catholic
Faith, that they might become vassals of your Majesty and s
erve and obey him, as
had al the Indians and peoples of those parts which are alre
ady peopled with
Spanish subjects of your Majesties. On the Captain reassurin
g them in this manner
they lost much of their former fear, and replied that they wo
uld wil ingly inform
their chieftains who had taken refuge in the hil s. The Captai
n thereupon gave them
a letter by which the chiefs might approach in safety and th

ey departed with it
promising to return within the space of five days. After waiti ng for the reply some
three or four days longer than the al otted time and seeing t hat they had not
reappeared Cortés decided to search out the coast on either side of him, in order that
the Island should not remain entirely deserted, and accordin gly sent out two
captains each with a hundred men, ordering them to procee d to either extremity of
the Island and to hold conversations with any Indians they might meet, tel ing them
that he was awaiting them in the port of San Juan de Portala tina in order to speak
with them on behalf of your Majesty; such Indians they were to beg and urge as best
they could to come to the said port but were to be careful n ot to do any harm to
them, in their persons, their houses or their goods, lest the natives should be
rendered more timid and deceitful than they were already. T he two captains
departed as they were commanded and returning within fou r days reported that al
the towns which they had come across were desolate. They brought with them,
however, ten or a dozen people whom they had managed to persuade, among whom
was an Indian chieftain to whom Cortés spoke by means of h is interpreter bidding
him go and inform the chiefs that he would in no wise depar t from the Island
without seeing and speaking to them. The chieftain agreeing left with the second
letter for the chiefs and two days later returned with the hea

d chief to inform Cortés
that he was the ruler of the Island and was come to see wha
t he wanted. The
Captain informed him that he wished them no harm, but tha
t they should come to
the knowledge of the true faith, and should know that we ac
knowledged as lords the
greatest princes of the earth and that these in their turn obe
yed a greater prince than
he, wherefore what he desired of them was not otherwise th
an that the chiefs and
Indians of that Island should likewise obey your Majesties, a
nd that doing so they would be favoured, no-
one being able to do them harm. The chief replied that he
was content so to do and sent for al the other chieftains of t
he Island, who coming
rejoiced greatly at al that the Captain Hernando Cortés had
spoken to their chief,
and were reassured in such manner that within a very few d
ays the towns were as
ful of people as before, and the Indians went about among
us with as little fear as if
they had already had dealings with us for many years....

From Hernando Cortés, Five Letters of Cortes to the Emperor
, trans. J. Bayard Morris (New York: Norton, 1991), 50–
52, 92–94. Translation copyright © 1969 by J.

Bayard Morris. Reprinted by permission of W. W. Norton & Co
mpany, Inc.

Accordingly, as the Captain Hernando Cortés saw that stores
were already
beginning to run short and that the men would suffer much f
rom hunger should he
delay there any longer, and the true object of his voyage res

t unattained, he decided,
his men agreeing, to depart; and so hoisting sail they left th at Island of Cozumel,
now Santa Cruz, very peaceably inclined, so much so that if it were proposed to
found a colony there the natives would be ready without coe rcion to serve their
Spanish masters. The chiefs in particular were left very cont ented and at ease with
what the Captain had told them on behalf of your Majesties and with the numerous
articles of finery which he had given them for their own pers ons. I think there can
be no doubt that al Spaniards who may happen to come to this Island in the future
wil be as wel received as if they were arriving in a land whi ch had been a long

wil be as wel received as if they were arriving in a land whi ch had been a long
time colonized. The Island of Cozumel is smal , without so m uch as a single river or
stream; al the water that the Indians drink is from wel s. Th e soil is composed solely
of rocks and stones, a certain portion of it being woody. The Indians’ only produce is that obtained from bee-
keeping, and our procurators are sending to your Majesties samples both of the land and of the honey for your Majestie s’ inspection.

Your Majesties must know that when the Captain told the chi efs in his first
interview with them that they must live no longer in the pag an faith which they held
they begged him to acquaint them with the law under which they were henceforth

to live. The Captain accordingly informed them to the best o
f his ability in the
Catholic Faith, leaving them a cross of wood which was fixed
on a high building and
an image of Our Lady the Virgin Mary, and gave them to un
derstand very ful y what
they must do to be good Christians, al of which they manife
stly received with very
good wil , and so we left them very happy and contented....

On arriving at the first town we found the Indians in boats dr
awn up on the shore
near the water.... Early next morning a few Indians approach
ed us in a canoe
bringing several chickens and enough maize to make a meal
for a few men and
bidding us accept these and depart from their land. The Cap
tain however spoke to
them through the interpreters giving them to understand th
at in no wise would he
depart from that land before he had found out the secret of i
t in order to be able to
send your Majesties a true account, and again begged them
not to be offended at his
project nor to deny him entrance for they also were subjects
of your Majesties.

However they stil forbade us to make a landing and urged u
s to depart. On their
return to the town the Captain decided to move, and ordere
d one of his captains to
go with two hundred men by a path which had been discove
red during the
preceding night to lead to the vil age. He himself embarked
with some eighty men
on the brigs and boats and took up his position in front of th

e town ready to land if
they would permit him to do so: even as he approached he f ound the Indians in war
paint and armed with bows and arrows, lances and smal rou nd shields, yel ing that
if we would not leave their land and wanted war it should be gin at once, for they
were men to defend their own homes. Cortés attempted to s peak with them four
times (your Majesties' notary who accompanied him witness ed to the same to the
effect that he did not desire war) but seeing that it was the determined wil of the
Indians to resist his landing and that they were beginning to shoot their arrows
against us, ordered the guns which we carried to be fired an d an attack to be made.

Immediately after the discharge of our guns and in the landi ng which fol owed a few
of our men were wounded, but final y the fury of our onslau ght and the sudden
attack of our comrades who had come up in the rear of the enemy forced them to
fly and abandon the vil age, which we accordingly took and settled ourselves in
what appeared to be the strongest part of it. In the evening of the fol owing day two
Indians arrived from their chiefs bringing a few very inferior gold ornaments of
smal value and told the Captain that they offered him these in order that in
exchange he might leave the land as it was before and do th em no hurt. Cortés
replied saying that as to doing them no hurt it pleased him wel , but as to leaving

the land they should know that from henceforward they mus
t acknowledge as lords
the greatest princes of the earth and must be their subjects
and serve them; by doing
which they would obtain many favours from your Majesties
who would help them
and defend them from their enemies. On this they replied th
at they were content to
do this, but nevertheless stil begged him to leave their land
, and so we arrived at friendly terms.

Having patched up this friendship the Captain pointed out th
at the Spanish troops

Having patched up this friendship the Captain pointed out th
at the Spanish troops
who were with him in the vil age had nothing to eat and had
 brought nothing from
their ships. He therefore asked them to bring us sufficient fo
od so long as we
remained on land, which they promised to do on the fol owin
g day, and so departed.

But the next day and another passed without any food arrivi
ng so that we were
faced with extreme shortness of provisions, and on the third
 day a few Spanish
soldiers asked leave of the Captain to visit some of the nearl
ying farms and see if
they could obtain some food…. Proceeding in this order the
vanguard came upon a
large body of Indians who were advancing to attack our cam
p, so that had we not
gone out to meet them that day it is very possible we shoul
d have been hard put to
it. And again the captain of artil ery made certain represent

ations (as your notary
can bear witness) to the Indians whom he met in ful war pai
nt, crying to them by
means of the native heralds and interpreters that we wante
d not war but peace with
them: their only answer was given not in words but in arrow
s which began to fal
very thickly. The leading party was thus already engaged wit
h the Indians when the
two officers in command of the rearguard came up, and it w
as not until two hours
later that Cortés arrived in a part of the wood where the Indi
ans were beginning to
encircle the Spaniards in the rear, and there he continued fi
ghting against the
Indians for about an hour; moreover such was their number
that neither those
among the Spaniards who were fighting on foot perceived th
ose on horseback nor
knew in what part of the field they were, nor could those on
horseback so much as
perceive one another as they surged hither and thither amo
ng the Indians. However,
as soon as the Spaniards perceived the horsemen they attac
ked stil more briskly and
almost immediately the Indians were put to flight, the pursui
t lasting half a league.

… And so having attended to the wounded and laid them up
on stretchers, we
regained our camp taking with us two Indians who were cap
tured there. These
Cortés ordered to be loosed, and sent them with letters to th
e chieftains tel ing them
that if they were wil ing to come to where he was he would
pardon them the evil

they had done and would be their friend. Accordingly the very same evening two
Indians who purported to be chieftains arrived, declaring that they were very
grieved at what had occurred and that the chieftains as a body begged him to
pardon them and not punish them further for what was passed nor kil any more of
their people, for over two hundred and twenty Indians had fal en; the past was past
and henceforward they were wil ing to be subjects of that prince of whom he had
spoken, and such they already held themselves to be, and bound themselves to do
him service whenever anything in your Majesties' name should be desired of them.

In this wise they sat down and peace was made. The Captain then enquired of
them by the interpreter what people it was who had fought in that battle, and they
replied that tribes from eight provinces had joined together in that place and that
according to the reckoning and lists which they possessed they would be about forty
thousand men, for they could wel reckon up to such a number. Thus your Majesties
may truly believe that this battle was won rather by the wil of God than by our own
strength, for of what avail are four hundred (and we were no more) against forty thousand warriors?

FRENCH REACTIONS: CHAMPLAIN

Samuel de Champlain (1567–
1635), was the chief French explorer in North America

and a key founder of New France, in Canada. He made his fir st fur-trading
expedition to the region in 1603 and subsequently participat ed in a number of other
expeditions, sometimes joining in attacks on the Iroquois Ind ians by the Huron tribe.

He wrote accounts of his travels in several editions, with a d efinitive edition

He wrote accounts of his travels in several editions, with a d efinitive edition
completed in exile (during a period when the English had co nquered New France) in
1632. In his later years, both before and after the English dis ruption, he served as
virtual governor of New France, and he was buried in Quebe c.

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FRENCH ENCOUNTERS IN NORTH AMERICA

Now I wil drop this discussion to return to the savages who had conducted me to
the fal s of the river Norumbegue, who went to notify Bessa bez, their chief, and
other savages, who in turn proceeded to another little river t o inform their own,
named Cabahis, and give him notice of our arrival.

From Voyages of Samuel de Champlain, 1604–
1618, ed. W. L. Grant (New York:
Charles Scribner’s, 1907), 49–50, 71–74, 97–100.

The 16th of the month there came to us some thirty savage s on assurances given

them by those who had served us as guides. There came als o to us the same day the above-
named Bessabez with six canoes. As soon as the savages w ho were on land
saw him coming, they al began to sing, dance, and jump, u ntil he had landed.

Afterwards, they al seated themselves in a circle on the gro und, as is their custom,
when they wish to celebrate a festivity, or an harangue is to be made. Cabahis, the
other chief, arrived also a little later with twenty or thirty of his companions, who
withdrew to one side and greatly enjoyed seeing us, as it wa s the first time they had
seen Christians. A little while after, I went on shore with two of my companions and
two of our savages who served as interpreters. I directed th e men in our barque to
approach near the savages, and hold their arms in readiness to do their duty in case
they noticed any movement of these people against us. Bes sabez, seeing us on land,
bade us sit down, and began to smoke with his companions, as they usual y do
before an address. They presented us with venison and gam e.

I directed our interpreter to say to our savages that they sho uld cause Bessabez,
Cabahis, and their companions to understand that Sieur de Monts had sent me to
them to see them, and also their country, and that he desire d to preserve friendship
with them and to reconcile them with their enemies, the Sou riquois and Canadians,

and moreover that he desired to inhabit their country and sh
ow them how to
cultivate it, in order that they might not continue to lead so
miserable a life as they
were doing, and some other words on the same subject. Thi
s our savages interpreted
to them, at which they signified their great satisfaction, sayi
ng that no greater good
could come to them than to have our friendship, and that th
ey desired to live in
peace with their enemies, and that we should dwel in their l
and, in order that they
might in future more than ever before engage in hunting be
avers, and give us a part
of them in return for our providing them with things which th
ey wanted. After he
had finished his discourse, I presented them with hatchets,
paternosters, caps, knives,
and other little knickknacks, when we separated from each
other. Al the rest of this
day and the fol owing night, until break of day, they did noth
ing but dance, sing,
and make merry, after which we traded for a certain number
 of beavers. Then each
party returned, Bessabez with his companions on the one si
de, and we on the other,
highly pleased at having made the acquaintance of this peo
ple.…

On the 23d of July, four or five seamen having gone on shor
e with some kettles to
get fresh water, which was to be found in one of the sandba
nks a short distance
from our barque, some of the savages, coveting them, watc
hed the time when our
men went to the spring, and then seized one out of the han

ds of a sailor, who was
the first to dip, and who had no weapons. One of his compa
nions, starting to run

the first to dip, and who had no weapons. One of his compa
nions, starting to run
after him, soon returned, as he could not catch him, since h
e ran much faster than
himself. The other savages, of whom there were a large num
ber, seeing our sailors
running to our barque, and at the same time shouting to us
to fire at them, took to
flight. At the time there were some of them in our barque, w
ho threw themselves
into the sea, only one of whom we were able to seize. Those
 on the land who had
taken to flight, seeing them swimming, returned straight to t
he sailor from whom
they had taken away the kettle, hurled several arrows at hi
m from behind, and
brought him down. Seeing this, they ran at once to him, and
 despatched him with
their knives. Meanwhile, haste was made to go on shore, an
d muskets were fired
from our barque: mine, bursting in my hands, came near kil
ing me. The savages, hearing this discharge of fire-
arms, took to flight, and with redoubled speed when
they saw that we had landed, for they were afraid when the
y saw us running after
them. There was no likelihood of our catching them, for they
 are as swift as horses.

We brought in the murdered man, and he was buried some
hours later. Meanwhile,
we kept the prisoner bound by the feet and hands on board
of our barque, fearing

that he might escape. But Sieur de Monts resolved to let hi m go, being persuaded
that he was not to blame, and that he had no previous know ledge of what had
transpired, as also those who, at the time, were in and abou t our barque. Some
hours later there came some savages to us, to excuse them selves, indicating by signs
and demonstrations that it was not they who had committed this malicious act, but
others farther off in the interior. We did not wish to harm the m, although it was in our power to avenge ourselves.

Al these savages from the Island Cape wear neither robes n or furs, except very
rarely: moreover, their robes are made of grasses and hemp , scarcely covering the
body, and coming down only to their thighs. They have only the sexual parts
concealed with a smal piece of leather; so likewise the wom en, with whom it comes
down a little lower behind than with the men, al the rest of the body being naked.

Whenever the women came to see us, they wore robes whic h were open in front. The
men cut off the hair on the top of the head like those at the river Choüacoet. I saw,
among other things, a girl with her hair very neatly dressed, with a skin colored red,
and bordered on the upper part with little shel beads. A part of her hair hung down
behind, the rest being braided in various ways. These peopl e paint the face red,
black, and yel ow. They have scarcely any beard, and tear it out as fast as it grows.

Their bodies are wel -
proportioned. I cannot tel what government they have, but I think that in this respect they resemble their neighbors, who have none at al . They
know not how to worship or pray; yet, like the other savages , they have some
superstitions, which I shal describe in their place. As for we apons, they have only
pikes, clubs, bows and arrows. It would seem from their app earance that they have a
good disposition, better than those of the north, but they ar e al in fact of no great
worth. Even a slight intercourse with them gives you at once a knowledge of them.

They are great thieves and, if they cannot lay hold of any thi ng with their hands,
they try to do so with their feet, as we have oftentimes learn ed by experience. I am
of opinion that, if they had any thing to exchange with us, th ey would not give
themselves to thieving. They bartered away to us their bows , arrows, and quivers,
for pins and buttons; and if they had had any thing else bett er they would have done
the same with it. It is necessary to be on one’s guard agains t this people, and live in
a state of distrust of them, yet without letting them perceive it. They gave us a large
quantity of tobacco, which they dry and then reduce to pow der. When they eat
Indian corn, they boil it in earthen pots, which they make in a way different from
ours. They bray it also in wooden mortars and reduce it to fl our, of which they then
make cakes, like the Indians of Peru.…

Now, in view of what Sieur de Poutrincourt had seen, and th e order which it had
been told him they observed when they wished to play som e bad trick, when we
passed by some cabins, where there was a large number of women, we gave them
some bracelets and rings to keep them quiet and free from f ear, and to most of the
old and distinguished men hatchets, knives, and other thing s which they desired.

This pleased them greatly, and they repaid it al in dances, g ambols, and harangues,
which we did not understand at al . We went wherever we c hose without their
having the assurance to say anything to us. It pleased us gr eatly to see them show
themselves so simple in appearance….

The next day, in the morning, the 15th of October, the sava ges did not fail to
come and see in what condition our men were, whom they f ound asleep, except one,
who was near the fire. When they saw them in this condition , they came, to the
number of four hundred, softly over a little hil , and sent the m such a vol ey of
arrows that to rise up was death. Fleeing the best they could towards our barque,
shouting, “Help! they are kil ing us!” a part fel dead in the water; the others were al
pierced with arrows, and one died in consequence a short ti me after. The savages
made a desperate noise with roarings, which it was terrible t o hear.

Upon the occurrence of this noise and that of our men, the s entinel, on our vessel,
exclaimed, “To arms! They are kil ing our men!” Consequent ly, each one
immediately seized his arms; and we embarked in the shal o p, some fifteen or
sixteen of us, in order to go ashore. But, being unable to get there on account of a
sandbank between us and the land, we threw ourselves into the water, and waded
from this bank to the shore, the distance of a musket-shot. As soon as we were there,
the savages, seeing us within arrow range, fled into the inte rior. To pursue them was
fruitless, for they are marvel ously swift. Al that we could do was to carry away the
dead bodies and bury them near a cross, which had been se t up the day before, and
then to go here and there to see if we could get sight of any of them. But it was time
wasted, therefore we came back. Three hours afterwards, th ey returned to us on the sea-
shore. We discharged at them several shots from our little br ass cannon; and,
when they heard the noise, they crouched down on the grou nd to avoid the fire. In
mockery of us, they beat down the cross and disinterred the dead, which displeased
us greatly, and caused us to go for them a second time; but they fled, as they had
done before. We set up again the cross, and reinterred the d ead, whom they had
thrown here and there amid the heath, where they kindled a fire to burn them. We
returned without any result, as we had done before, wel aw are that there was

scarcely hope of avenging ourselves this time, and that we s
hould have to renew the
undertaking when it should please God.

AZTEC REACTIONS: THE BROKEN SPEARS

The Broken Spears is a compilation of a number of Aztec an
d other Indian records
from the sixteenth century, assembled in the 1960s by a Sp
anish scholar. The
materials include codices original y written in the Nahuat lan
guage (one of the Aztec-
stem languages) that escaped the general Spanish destructi
on of native-
language documents, plus later recol ections written by Indi
ans in Spanish. The
reassembly of the materials in rough chronological order, by
 the book's editor,
permits unique insight into one whole side of this fateful enc
ounter.

• • •

Then Motecuhzoma gave the messengers his final orders. H
e said to them: "Go now,
without delay. Do reverence to our lord the god. Say to him:
'Your deputy,

without delay. Do reverence to our lord the god. Say to him:
'Your deputy,
Motecuhzoma, has sent us to you. Here are the presents wit
h which he welcomes you home to Mexico.'" …

One by one they did reverence to Cortes by touching the gr
ound before him with
their lips. They said to him: "If the god wil deign to hear us,
your deputy

Motecuhzoma has sent us to render you homage. He has th e City of Mexico in his care. He says: ‘The god is weary.’”

Then they arrayed the Captain in the finery they had brough t him as presents.

With great care they fastened the turquoise mask in place, t he mask of the god with
its crossband of quetzal feathers. A golden earring hung do wn on either side of this
mask. They dressed him in the decorated vest and the col ar woven in the petatil o style—-
the col ar of chalchihuites, with a disk of gold in the center.

Next they fastened the mirror to his hips, dressed him in the cloak known as “the
ringing bel ” and adorned his feet. … In his hand they place d the shield with its
fringe and pendant of quetzal feathers, its ornaments of gol d and mother-of-pearl.

Final y they set before him the pair of black sandals. As for t he other objects of
divine finery, they only laid them out for him to see.

The Captain asked them: “And is this al ? Is this your gift of welcome? Is this how you greet people?”

They replied: “This is al , our lord. This is what we have brou ght you.”

Then the Captain gave orders, and the messengers were ch ained by the feet and by
the neck. When this had been done, the great cannon was fi red off. The messengers
lost their senses and fainted away. They fel down side by si de and lay where they

had fal en. But the Spaniards quickly revived them: they lifte d them up, gave them
wine to drink and then offered them food.

From Miguel Leon-
Portil a, The Broken Spears (expanded and updated edition, Boston: Beacon, 1992). © by Miguel Leon-
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The Captain said to them: “I have heard that the Mexicans a re very great warriors,
very brave and terrible. If a Mexican is fighting alone, he kn ows how to retreat, turn
back, rush forward and conquer, even if his opponents are t en or even twenty. But
my heart is not convinced. I want to see it for myself. I want to find out if you are truly that strong and brave.”

Then he gave them swords, spears and leather shields. He s aid: “It wil take place
very early, at daybreak. We are going to fight each other in pairs, and in this way we
wil learn the truth. We wil see who fal s to the ground!”

They said to the Captain: “Our lord, we were not sent here f or this by your deputy
Motecuhzoma! We have come on an exclusive mission, to of fer you rest and repose
and to bring you presents. What the lord desires is not withi n our warrant. If we
were to do this, it might anger Motecuhzoma, and he would surely put us to death.”…

Then they left in great haste and continued to the City of Me xico. They entered
the city at night, in the middle of the night.

The messengers went to the House of the Serpent, and Motecuhzoma arrived. The two captives were then sacrificed before his eyes: their breasts were torn open, and the messengers were sprinkled with their blood. This was done because the messengers had completed a difficult mission: they had seen the gods, their eyes had looked on their faces. They had even conversed with the gods!

When the sacrifice was finished, the messengers reported to the king. They told him how they had made the journey, and what they had seen, and what food the strangers ate. Motecuhzoma was astonished and terrified by their report, and the description of the strangers' food astonished him above all else.

He was also terrified to learn how the cannon roared, how its noise resounded, how it caused one to faint and grow deaf. The messengers told him: "A thing like a ball of stone comes out of its entrails: it comes out shooting sparks and raining fire.

The smoke that comes out with it has a pestilent odor, like that of rotten mud. This odor penetrates even to the brain and causes the greatest discomfort. If the cannon is aimed against a mountain, the mountain splits and cracks open. If it is aimed against a tree, it shatters the tree into splinters. This is a most unnatural sight, as if the tree had exploded from within."

The messengers also said: “Their trappings and arms are al made of iron. They dress in iron and wear iron casques on their heads. Their sw ords are iron; their bows are iron; their shields are iron; their spears are iron. Their de er carry them on their backs wherever they wish to go. These deer, our lord, are as tal as the roof of a house.

“The strangers’ bodies are completely covered, so that only their faces can be seen. Their skin is white, as if it were made of lime. They ha ve yel ow hair, though some of them have black. Their beards are long and yel ow, and their moustaches are also yel ow. Their hair is curly, with very fine strands.

“As for their food, it is like human food. It is large and white, and not heavy. It is something like straw, but with the taste of a cornstalk, of th e pith of a cornstalk. It is a little sweet, as if it were flavored with honey; it tastes of honey, it is sweet-tasting food….

When Motecuhzoma heard this report, he was fil ed with terr or. It was as if his heart had fainted, as if it had shriveled. It was as if he were conquered by despair.

While the Spaniards were in Tlaxcala, a great plague broke o ut here in Tenochtitlan [the Aztec capital, now Mexico City]. It began to spread during the thirteenth month and lasted for seventy days, striking every where in the city and kil ing a vast number of our people. Sores erupted on our fa

ces, our breasts, our
bel ies; we were covered with agonizing sores from head to f oot.

The il ness was so dreadful that no one could walk or move. The sick were so
utterly helpless that they could only lie on their beds like cor pses, unable to move
their limbs or even their heads. They could not lie face down or rol from one side to
the other. If they did move their bodies, they screamed with pain.

A great many died from this plague, and many others died o f hunger. They could
not get up to search for food, and everyone else was too sic k to care for them, so they starved to death in their beds.

Some people came down with a milder form of the disease; they suffered less than
the others and made a good recovery. But they could not es cape entirely. Their looks
were ravaged, for wherever a sore broke out, it gouged an u gly pockmark in the
skin. And a few of the survivors were left completely blind.

CHAPTER 17

THE SPREAD OF SLAVERY AND THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

Atlantic history, as a category, is gaining increasing attentio n. The ocean became a
world trade artery for the first time in the fifteenth century. More important were
the human connections formed, as peoples from both sides of the Atlantic, and from

north and south, interacted in various ways. New creativity and new suffering both resulted.

This chapter deals with the unprecedented transatlantic trade in African slaves, which began in the sixteenth century and continued for three hundred years. This trade had a host of impacts in world history and in the development of all the regions involved.

The capture and purchase of millions of Africans, who were sent as slaves to South and North America and the Caribbean by European slave traders from the sixteenth century until the early nineteenth, mainly for plantation work, constitute one of the key episodes of early modern world history. The result weakened internal trade balance and population size in West Africa, though individual merchants and rulers benefited. The profits helped fuel Europe's commercial economy. The spread of slavery and the impact of diverse African cultures left durable marks on the Americas.

Slavery was an old institution. Most river valley civilizations had held slaves, often captives in war. Greek and Roman societies had depended heavily on slaves, who provided domestic service but also did vital, brutal work in mines and on agricultural estates. Roman use of slaves for agricultural labor indeed provided the clearest prior precedent for the new slavery of the early modern period. Slavery also existed within Africa, again involving captures in war and th

e ensuing hereditary
status of their descendants. Though the numbers of slaves were relatively smal ,
Africa obviously contained a preestablished group of slave merchants.

Nevertheless, the volume, speed, and displacement of the n ew transatlantic slave
trade had no precedent. Europeans in the Americas hoped t o find gold and other
easy wealth. In fact, they discovered the profitability of som e mining and also
export agricultural production. Yet local labor was scarce, in large part because the
majority of the American Indian population died off in contac t with European
diseases. Africa, newly explored by European voyagers, see med to provide the
answer, in a context where Europeans now ruled the seas.

Here, clearly, was a radical y new international contact, whic h affected Europe,
Africa, and the Americas. The impact on Africa has been mu ch debated. Population
loss and diversion of trade away from the Muslim world, as t ransatlantic commerce replaced trans-
Saharan, definitely made a difference. On the other hand, st rong
governments persisted in Africa, as did older cultural forms. Europe was most
obviously affected by the money its merchants made, which increased wealth and capital—
helping to fuel further economic change, including ultimatel y the industrial
revolution. More subtly, European views of Africans, though not yet as thoroughly

racist as they would become in the nineteenth century, beca me hardened in ways
that stil affect world history. The massive new labor force in the Americas enhanced
the ability to generate exports such as sugar for the world e conomy. Africans also
brought their cultures and their experience of the slave voya ge and of slavery itself,

brought their cultures and their experience of the slave voya ge and of slavery itself,
which would contribute vital ingredients to the history of the Americas from this time onward.

Final y, of course, there was the impact on the slaves thems elves, for whom this
was an unquestionably dreadful experience. Deaths and mis treatment on the slave
ships were compounded by harsh treatment in the Americas —though there were
different levels of awfulness. The fear and indignity of the ex perience affected
surviving slaves more perhaps than the physical torment. H ere, too, were important
ingredients of early modern world history that would have o ngoing impacts on the
large African American minorities in the Caribbean and on b oth American continents.

In the fol owing selections, a European slave trader presents his observations,
indirectly highlighting some of the attitudes that would al o w him to accept his
active commercial role. Then, from a hundred years later, in the eighteenth century,
an African former slave presents his view of the same proce

ss. We are able to
juxtapose two different vantage points, that of the actors an d that of the acted upon,
to determine how they evaluated the same basic historical p rocess and what larger
consequences their perspectives suggest.

The slave trade constitutes one of those common events wit h at least two
radical y different sides, the winners and the losers. Compari son can help sort out
what real y happened, while sharpening the analysis of the experience of both parties.

Questions

1. What did Europeans offer Africans in the slave trade? How were slaves obtained from the African interior? Do Barbot and Equiano agree on the methods used?

2. Why were European traders so nonchalant about their own involvement, and so willing to be involved?

3. What impact did Europeans think they were having on Africa itself, including African states and rulers?

4. How did Christianity interact with the slave trade? Does Barbot reflect Christian criteria in his slave trader account?

5. Were the European traders aware of slaves as humans? Could they distinguish good from bad treatment? How did they understand and deal with the reactions of slaves themselves to the experience of capture and trade?

6. Are there any similarities between European and African descriptions of the trade? How did Africans react to European technology and material culture? What was the role of beliefs in magic? Did Africans have the fears of Europeans that the slave traders claimed? What motives did they ascribe to Europeans?

7. Slave traders and slaves both were potentially partisan. Does either of the following accounts seem exaggerated? Does Barbot show any signs of distorting his descriptions to make himself look good, or does he not b

elieve he has to
bother? Does Equiano exaggerate problems or ignore benefi ts?

For Further Discussion

1. Which account most helps you to understand the slave tr ade and the experiences
involved? Which is more informative? Which provides the be tter basis for assessing the effects of the slave trade?

2. Judging by Barbot’s discussion, were slave traders racist? Scholars debate whether

2. Judging by Barbot’s discussion, were slave traders racist? Scholars debate whether
Western racism helped cause the European treatment of sla ves or was a result of
it. What does Barbot’s account suggest? Is this a useful ques tion for the early modern period?

3. What impact would the trade and the passage across the Atlantic have in the later
lives of the slaves and their descendants? Does either of the accounts in this chapter suggest probable impacts?

4. What was different about slavery and the slave trade in th e Americas from more
traditional forms of slavery? What accounts for the differenc es?

THE SLAVE TRADER’S VIEW: JOHN BARBOT

John Barbot was an employee of a French slave trading com pany. He made several
trips to West Africa in the 1670s and 1680s. His account is u nusual y detailed,

suggesting an active intel ect, whatever his other attributes were. And he clearly
harbored some internal ambivalence about the treatment he saw and participated in

—
though it’s possible to argue that he did almost nothing abo ut his qualms.

From Elysbeth Doman, ed., Documents Il ustrative of the His tory of the Slave Trade
to America (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institute, 1930), 282 –85, 286–90, 293, 294–

95.

• • •

Goods for Trade

…
the French import common red, blue, and scarlet cloth, silve
r and brass rings, or
bracelets, chains, little bel s, false crystal, ordinary and coar
se hats; Dutch pointed
knives, pewter dishes, silk sashes, with false gold and silver
fringes; blue serges,
French paper, steels to strike fire… brass kettles, yel ow am
ber, maccatons, that is,
beads of two sorts, pieces of eight of the old stamp, some sil
ver pieces of 28 sols
value, either plain or gilt, Dutch cutlaces, strait and bow’d, c
louts, galet, martosdes,
two other sorts of beads, of which the Blacks make necklace
s for women, white
sugar, musket bal s, iron nails, shot, white and red frize, loo
king-glasses in gilt and
plain frames, cloves, cinnamon, scissors, needles, coarse thr
ead of sundry colours,
but chiefly red, yel ow, and white. … Particularly at Goeree, t
he company imports
ten thousand or more every year, of those which are made i
n the province of
Brittany, al short and thin, which is cal ed in London narrow
flat iron, or half flat
iron of Sweden; but each bar shortened, or cut off at one en
d to about 16 or 18

inches, so that about eighty of these bars weigh a ton, or tw
enty hundred weight
English. It is to be observ’d, that such voyage-
iron, as cal ed in London, is the only
sort and size used throughout al Nigritia, Guinea, and West-
Ethiopia, in the way of
trade. Lastly, a good quantity of Coignac brandy, both in ho
gsheads and rundlets,
single and double, the double being eight, the single four ga
l ons.

The principal goods the French have in return for these com
modities from the Moors and Blacks, are slaves, gold-
dust, elephants teeth, bees-wax, dry and green hides, gum-
arabick, ostrich feathers, and several other odd things.…

The French have built a smal fort, mounted with eight guns.
 … There they buy
slaves in considerable numbers… which they convey down t
o their factory every year.…

The country of little Brak affords them slaves.…

At the vil ages of Bozaert, or Bozar, and Caye, near the facto
ry they have slaves.…

Slaves

Those sold by the Blacks are for the most part prisoners of war, taken either in fight,
or pursuit, or in the incursions they make into their enemies' territories; others
stolen away by their own countrymen; and some there are, who wil sel their own
children, kindred, or neighbours. This has been often seen, a nd to compass it, they
desire the person they intend to sel , to help them in carryin g something to the
factory by way of trade, and when there, the person so delu ded, not understanding
the language, is sold and deliver'd up as a slave, notwithsta nding al his resistance,
and exclaiming against the treachery. I was told of one, who design'd to sel his own
son, after that manner; but he understanding French, disse mbled for a while, and
then contriv'd it so cunningly as to persuade the French, tha t the old man was his
slave, and not his father, by which means he deliver'd him u p into captivity; and
thus made good the Italian Proverb, A furbo furbo e mezzo; amounting to as much
as, Set a thief to catch a thief, or Diamond cuts Diamond. H owever, it happened
soon after, that the fel ow was met by some of the principal Blacks of the country,
as he was returning home from the factory, with the goods h e had receiv'd for the
sale of his father, al which they took away, and order'd him to be sold for a slave.

The kings are so absolute, that upon any slight pretence of offences committed by their subjects, they order them to be sold for slaves, without regard to rank, or possession. Thus a Marabout, or Priest, as I believe, was sold to me at Goeree, by the Alcaide of Rio Fresco, by special order of king Damel, for some misdemeanors. I took notice, that this Priest was above two months aboard the ship, before he would speak one word....

Abundance of little Blacks of both sexes are also stolen away by their neighbours, when found abroad on the roads, or in the woods; or else in the Cougans, or cornfields, at the time of the year, when their parents keep them there all day, to scare away the devouring small birds, that come to feed on the millet, in swarms, as has been said above.

In times of dearth and famine, abundance of those people will sell themselves, for a maintenance, and to prevent starving. When I first arriv'd at Goeree, in December, 1681, I could have bought a great number, at very easy rates, if I could have found provisions to subsist them; so great was the dearth then, in that part of Nigritia.

To conclude, some slaves are also brought to these Blacks, from very remote inland countries, by way of trade, and sold for things of very inconsiderable value; but these slaves are general y poor and weak, by reason of the barbarous usage they

have had in traveling so far, being continual y beaten, and a lmost famish’d; so inhuman are the Blacks to one another.…

The great wealth of the Fantineans [Fantyn, a West African c ountry] makes them
so proud and haughty, that an European trading there must stand bare to them. … A
good slave sel s there, as at al other trading places on the Gold-Coast westward, at
the rate of one Benda of gold, which is two ounces.…

In time of war, it [Accra] furnishes so great a number of slav es, that it amounts
to, at least, as many as are sold al along the rest of the coa st. This country is
continual y in war with some of the neighbouring nations, w hich are very populous,
and from whom they take very many prisoners, most of who m, they sel to the
Europeans. The slaves are commonly purchased for coesvelt linen, slyziger, lywat,
sheets, sayes, perpetuanas, firelocks, powder, brandy, bugle s, knives, top-sails,
nicannees, and other goods, according to the times. The nat ives carry those
commodities to Abonee market, which is four leagues beyon d Great Acra northward,
for the Accanez people, who resort thither three times a wee k; as do other Blacks

for the Accanez people, who resort thither three times a wee k; as do other Blacks
from the country of Abonee, Aquamboe, and Aquimera, who al buy those goods of
the Acra men, at such rates as they think fit to put upon the m, the king refusing to

permit those strangers to go down themselves to the Europ
ean warehouses on the
coast; for which reason, those Blacks pay often double the v
alue for what they buy.

The king has there an overseer, who has the power to set th
e price on al goods,
between buyer and sel er. This general overseer is assisted
by several officers to act
for him, where he cannot be present himself. Those employ
ments are much sought
after there, as being both honourable and advantageous; be
cause, both the king’s
and their perquisites are very considerable….

The king and chief Blacks of Acra were, in my time, very rich
 in slaves and gold,
through the vast trade the natives drove with the Europeans
 on the coast, and the
neighbouring nations up the country….

The trade of slaves is in a more peculiar manner the busines
s of kings, rich men,
and prime merchants, exclusive of the inferior sort of Blacks
.

These slaves are severely and barbarously treated by their
masters, who subsist
them poorly, and beat them inhumanly, as may be seen by t
he scabs and wounds on
the bodies of many of them when sold to us. They scarce al
ow them the least rag to
cover their nakedness, which they also take off from them w
hen sold to Europeans; and they always go bare-
headed. The wives and children of slaves, are also slaves to
the master under whom they are married; and when dead, t

hey never bury them, but
cast out the bodies into some by place, to be devoured by bi
rds, or beasts of prey.

This barbarous usage of those unfortunate wretches, makes
it appear, that the fate
of such as are bought, and transported from the coast to Am
erica, or other parts of
the world, by Europeans, is less deplorable, than that of thos
e who end their days in
their native country; for aboard ships al possible care is tak
en to preserve and
subsist them for the interest of the owners, and when sold i
n America, the same
motive ought to prevail with their masters to use them wel ,
that they may live the
longer, and do them more service. Not to mention the inesti
mable advantage they
may reap, of becoming christians, and saving their souls, if t
hey make a true use of their condition….

I also remember, that I once, among my several runs along t
hat coast, happened
to have aboard a whole family, man, wife, three young boys,
 and a girl, bought one
after another, at several places; and cannot but observe her
e, what mighty
satisfaction those poor creatures expressed to be so come t
ogether again, tho’ in
bondage. For several days successively they could not forbe
ar shedding tears of joy,
and continual y embracing and caressing one another; whic
h moving me to
compassion, I ordered they should be better treated aboard
than commonly we can
afford to do it, where there are four or five hundred in a ship

; and at Martinico, I
sold them al together to a considerable planter, at a cheap
er rate than I might have
expected, had they been disposed of several y; being inform
ed of that gentleman’s good-
nature, and having taken his word, that he would use that fa
mily as wel as
their circumstances would permit, and settle them in some
part by themselves.

I have elsewhere spoke of the manner of valuing and rating
the slaves among the
Blacks, and shal conclude this chapter, which proves to be
one of the longest, with
an odd remark; which is, That many of those slaves we trans
port from Guinea to
America are prepossessed with the opinion, that they are ca
rried like sheep to the
slaughter, and that the Europeans are fond of their flesh; wh
ich notion so far
prevails with some, as to make them fal into a deep melanc
holy and despair, and to
refuse al sustenance, tho’ never so much compel ed and ev
en beaten to oblige them

refuse al sustenance, tho’ never so much compel ed and ev
en beaten to oblige them
to take some nourishment: notwithstanding al which, they
wil starve to death;
whereof I have had several instances in my own slaves both
aboard and at
Guadalupe. And tho’ I must say I am natural y compassionat
e, yet have I been
necessitated sometimes to cause the teeth of those wretche
s to be broken, because
they would not open their mouths, or be prevailed upon by a

ny intreaties to feed
themselves; and thus have forced some sustenance into the
ir throats.…

As the slaves come down to Fida from the inland country, th
ey are put into a
booth, or prison, built for that purpose, near the beach, al o
f them together; and
when the Europeans are to receive them, they are brought o
ut into a large plain,
where the surgeons examine every part of every one of the
m, to the smal est
member, men and women being al stark naked. Such as ar
e al owed good and
sound, are set on one side, and the others by themselves; w
hich slaves so rejected are
there cal ed Mackrons, being above thirty five years of age,
or defective in their
limbs, eyes or teeth; or grown grey, or that have the venere
al disease, or any other
imperfection. These being so set aside, each of the others,
which have passed as
good, is marked on the breast, with a red-
hot iron, imprinting the mark of the
French, English, or Dutch companies, that so each nation ma
y distinguish their own,
and to prevent their being chang’d by the natives for worse,
 as they are apt enough
to do. In this particular, care is taken that the women, as ten
derest, be not burnt too hard.…

If there happens to be no stock of slaves at Fida, the factor
must trust the Blacks
with his goods, to the value of a hundred and fifty, or two hu
ndred slaves; which
goods they carry up into the inland, to buy slaves, at al the

markets, for above two
hundred leagues up the country, where they are kept like ca
ttle in Europe; the slaves
sold there being general y prisoners of war, taken from their
enemies, like other
booty, and perhaps some few sold by their own countrymen,
in extreme want, or
upon a famine; as also some as a punishment of heinous cri
mes: tho’ many
Europeans believe that parents sel their own children, men
their wives and
relations, which, if it ever happens, is so seldom, that it cann
ot justly be charged
upon a whole nation, as a custom and common practice....

As to the slaves, and the trade of them, whereof I have befo
re spoke at large, it
wil be proper to observe here, that commonly the slaves we
purchase at Fida and
Ardra, are brought down to the coast from several countries,
two and three hundred
leagues up the inland; where the inhabitants are lusty, stron
g, and very laborious
people: thence it is, that tho’ they are not so black and fine t
o look at as the North-Guinea and Gold-
Coast Blacks, yet are they fitter for the American plantations
, than
any others; especial y in the sugar islands, where they requi
re more labour and
strength than in the other colonies of Europeans, at which th
e Fida and Ardra slaves
are found, by constant experience, to hold out much longer,
and with less detriment
to themselves, than the other slaves transported thither fro
m the other
abovementioned parts of Guinea. One thing is to be taken n

otice of by sea-faring
men, that these Fida and Ardra slaves are of al the others, t he most apt to revolt
aboard ships, by a conspiracy carried on amongst themselv es; especial y such as are
brought down to Fida, from very remote inland countries, wh o easily draw others
into their plot: for being used to see men’s flesh eaten in the ir own country, and
publick markets held for that purpose, they are very ful of t he notion, that we buy
and transport them to the same purpose; and wil therefore watch al opportunities
to deliver themselves, by assaulting a ship’s crew, and murd ering them al , if
possible: whereof, we have almost every year some instanc es, in one European ship or other, that is fil ed with slaves.

THE AFRICAN SLAVE EXPERIENCE: OLAUDAH EQUIANO

Most slaves, needless to say, had no opportunity to write ab out their experience.

Olaudah Equiano’s account is unusual because of its existen ce, but the experience
reported is not necessarily unusual. Equiano was born in a N igerian vil age, Isseke,
in 1745. He was kidnapped and in 1756 taken to Barbados a nd then to Virginia.

Final y able to buy his freedom from his Quaker master, he went to England in 1767.

He became active in the antislavery movement, publishing his memoirs in 1788 as a

protest against the whole institution of slavery. His writings were among the first antislavery books by an ex-slave.

• • •

My father, besides many slaves, had a numerous family, of which seven lived to
grow up, including myself and sister, who was the only daug hter. As I was the
youngest of the sons, I became, of course, the greatest favo rite with my mother, and
was always with her; and she used to take particular pains t o form my mind. I was
trained up from my earliest years in the art of war: my daily exercise was shooting
and throwing javelins, and my mother adorned me with emb lems, after the manner
of our greatest warriors. In this way I grew up til I had turne d the age of eleven,
when an end was put to my happiness in the fol owing man ner.…

From The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equian o, ed. Robert J. Al ison (Boston: Bedford Books, 1995), 46–58. (Fol ows the first American printing [New
York, 1791]). Includes modernized spel ing.

One day, when al our people were gone out to their works a s usual, and only I
and my dear sister were left to mind the house, two men an d a woman got over our
wal s, and in a moment seized us both, and, without giving us time to cry out, or
make resistance, they stopped our mouths, and ran off with us into the nearest
wood. Here they tied our hands, and continued to carry us a

s far as they could, til
night came on, when we reached a smal house, where the r obbers halted for
refreshment, and spent the night. We were then unbound, b ut were unable to take
any food; and, being quite overpowered by fatigue and grief , our only relief was
some sleep, which al ayed our misfortune for a short time. T he next morning we left
the house, and continued travel ing al the day. For a long ti me we had kept the
woods, but at last we came into a road which I believed I kn ew. I had now some
hopes of being delivered; for we had advanced but a little w ay before I discovered
some people at a distance, on which I began to cry out for t heir assistance; but my
cries had no other effect than to make them tie me faster an d stop my mouth, and
then they put me into a large sack. They also stopped my si ster’s mouth, and tied her
hands; and in this manner we proceeded til we were out of sight of these people.

When we went to rest the fol owing night, they offered us so me victuals, but we
refused it; and the only comfort we had was in being in one another’s arms al that
night, and bathing each other with our tears. But alas! we w ere soon deprived of
even the smal comfort of weeping together.

The next day proved a day of greater sorrow than I had yet experienced; for my
sister and I were then separated, while we lay clasped in ea ch other’s arms. It was in

vain that we besought them not to part us; she was torn fro
m me, and immediately
carried away, while I was left in a state of distraction not to
be described.

From the time I left my own nation, I always found somebod
y that understood
me til I came to the sea coast. The languages of different n
ations did not total y
differ, nor were they so copious as those of the Europeans, p
articularly the English.

differ, nor were they so copious as those of the Europeans, p
articularly the English.

They were therefore easily learned; and, while I was journeyi
ng thus through Africa,
I acquired two or three different tongues.…

The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the
 coast, was the sea,
and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiti
ng for its cargo. These
fil ed me with astonishment, which was soon converted into
terror, when I was
carried on board. I was immediately handled, and tossed up
to see if I were sound,
by some of the crew; and I was now persuaded that I had go
tten into a world of bad
spirits, and that they were going to kil me. Their complexio
ns, too, differing so
much from ours, their long hair, and the language they spok
e (which was very
different from any I had ever heard), united to confirm me in
 this belief. Indeed,
such were the horrors of my views and fears at the moment,

that, if ten thousand
worlds had been my own, I would have freely parted with th
em al to have
exchanged my condition with that of the meanest slave in m
y own country. When I
looked round the ship too, and saw a large furnace of copper
boiling, and a
multitude of black people of every description chained toget
her, every one of their
countenances expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer d
oubted of my fate; and,
quite overpowered with horror and anguish, I fel motionless
on the deck and
fainted. When I recovered a little, I found some black people
about me, who I
believed were some of those who had brought me on board,
and had been receiving
their pay; they talked to me in order to cheer me, but al in
vain. I asked them if we
were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks
, red faces, and long hair. They told me I was not.…

I now saw myself deprived of al chance of returning to my n
ative country, or
even the least glimpse of hope of gaining the shore, which I
now considered as
friendly; and I even wished for my former slavery in preferen
ce to my present
situation, which was fil ed with horrors of every kind, stil hei
ghtened by my
ignorance of what I was to undergo. I was not long suffered t
o indulge my grief; I
was soon put down under the decks, and there I received su
ch a salutation in my
nostrils as I had never experienced in my life: so that, with t
he loathsomeness of the

stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste anything. I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and, on my refusing to eat, one of them held me fast by the hands, and laid me across, I think, the windlass, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely. I had never experienced anything of this kind before, and, although not being used to the water, I natural y feared that element the first time I saw it, yet, nevertheless, could I have got over the nettings, I would have jumped over the side, but I could not; and besides, the crew used to watch us very closely who were not chained down to the decks, lest we should leap into the water; and I have seen some of these poor African prisoners most severely cut, for attempting to do so, and hourly whipped for not eating. This indeed was often the case with myself.

In a little time after, amongst the poor chained men, I found some of my own nation, which in a smal degree gave ease to my mind. I inquired of these what was to be done with us? They gave me to understand, we were to be carried to these white people's country to work for them. I then was a little revived, and thought, if it were no worse than working, my situation was not so desperate; but stil I feared I should be put to death, the white people looked and acted, as I thought, in so savage

a manner; for I had never seen among any people such inst
ances of brutal cruelty;
and this not only shown towards us blacks, but also to some
of the whites
themselves. One white man in particular I saw, when we wer
e permitted to be on

themselves. One white man in particular I saw, when we wer
e permitted to be on
deck, flogged so unmerciful y with a large rope near the fore
mast, that he died in
consequence of it; and they tossed him over the side as the
y would have done a
brute. This made me fear these people the more; and I expe
cted nothing less than to
be treated in the same manner. I could not help expressing
my fears and
apprehensions to some of my countrymen; I asked them if t
hese people had no
country, but lived in this hol ow place (the ship)?

They told me they did not, but came from a distant one. “Th
en,” said I, “how comes
it in al our country we never heard of them?” They told me
because they lived so
very far off. … I therefore wished much to be [away] from …
them, for I expected
they would sacrifice me; but my wishes were vain—
for we were so quartered that it
was impossible for any of us to make our escape….

At last, when the ship we were in, had got in al her cargo, t
hey made ready with
many fearful noises, and we were al put under deck, so that
 we could not see how
they managed the vessel. But this disappointment was the l

east of my sorrow. The
stench of the hold while we were on the coast was so intoler
ably loathsome, that it
was dangerous to remain there for any time, and some of us
had been permitted to
stay on the deck for the fresh air; but now that the whole shi
p’s cargo were confined
together, it became absolutely pestilential. The closeness of
the place, and the heat
of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was s
o crowded that each
had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. Thi
s produced copious
perspirations, so that the air soon became unfit for respirati
on, from a variety of
loathsome smel s, and brought on a sickness among the sla
ves, of which many died

—
thus fal ing victims to the improvident avarice, as I may cal
it, of their
purchasers. This wretched situation was again aggravated b
y the gal ing of the
chains, now became insupportable, and the filth of the nece
ssary tubs, into which
the children often fel , and were almost suffocated. The shri
eks of the women, and
the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horro
r almost inconceivable.

Happily perhaps, for myself, I was soon reduced so low here
that it was thought
necessary to keep me almost always on deck; and from my
extreme youth I was not
put in fetters. In this situation I expected every hour to shar
e the fate of my

companions, some of whom were almost daily brought upon deck at the point of death, which I began to hope would soon put an end to my miseries. Often did I think many of the inhabitants of the deep much more happy than myself. I envied them the freedom they enjoyed, and as often wished I could change my condition for theirs. Every circumstance I met with, served only to ren der my state more painful, and heightened my apprehensions, and my opinion of the cruelty of the whites.

One day they had taken a number of fishes; and when they had kil ed and satisfied themselves with as many as they thought fit, to our astonishment who were on deck, rather than give any of them to us to eat, as we ex pected, they tossed the remaining fish into the sea again, although we begged and prayed for some as wel as we could, but in vain; and some of my countrymen, being pressed by hunger, took an opportunity, when they thought no one saw them, of tryi ng to get a little privately; but they were discovered, and the attempt procur ed them some very severe floggings.

One day, when we had a smooth sea and moderate wind, tw o of my wearied countrymen who were chained together (I was near them at the time), preferring death to such a life of misery, somehow made through the n ettings and jumped into the sea; immediately, another quite dejected fel ow, who, o n account of his il ness,

was suffered to be out of irons, also fol owed their example; and I believe many

was suffered to be out of irons, also fol owed their example; and I believe many
more would very soon have done the same, if they had not been prevented by the
ship’s crew, who were instantly alarmed….

At last we came in sight of the island of Barbados, at which t he whites on board
gave a great shout, and made many signs of joy to us. We di d not know what to
think of this; but as the vessel drew nearer, we plainly saw t he harbor, and other
ships of different kinds of sizes, and we soon anchored amo ngst them, off
Bridgetown. Many merchants and planters now came on boa rd, though it was in the
evening. They put us in separate parcels, and examined us attentively. They also
made us jump, and pointed to the land, signifying we were t o go there. We thought
by this, we should be eaten by these ugly men, as they app eared to us; and, when
soon after we were al put down under the deck again, there was much dread and
trembling among us, and nothing but bitter cries to be hear d al the night from these
apprehensions, insomuch, that at last the white people got s ome old slaves from the
land to pacify us. They told us we were not to be eaten, but to work, and were soon
to go on land, where we should see many of our country peo ple. This report eased us

much. And sure enough, soon after we were landed, there c ame to us Africans of al languages.

We were conducted immediately to the merchant’s yard, wh ere we were al pent
up together, like so many sheep in a fold, without regard to sex or age. As every
object was new to me, everything I saw fil ed me with surpri se. What struck me first,
was, that the houses were built with bricks and stories, and i n every other respect
different from those I had seen in Africa; but I was stil more astonished on seeing
people on horseback. I did not know what this could mean; a nd, indeed, I thought
these people were ful of nothing but magical arts. While I w as in this astonishment,
one of my fel ow prisoners spoke to a countryman of his, ab out the horses, who said
they were the same kind they had in their country. I underst ood them, though they
were from a distant part of Africa; and I thought it odd I had not seen any horses
there; but afterwards, when I came to converse with differen t Africans, I found they
had many horses amongst them, and much larger than thos e I then saw.

We were not many days in the merchant’s custody, before w e were sold after their
usual manner, which is this: On a signal given (as the beat o f a drum), the buyers
rush at once into the yard where the slaves are confined, an d make choice of that
parcel they like best. The noise and clamor with which this is attended, and the

eagerness visible in the countenances of the buyers, serve not a little to increase the
apprehension of terrified Africans, who may well be supposed to consider them as
the ministers of that destruction to which they think themselves devoted. In this
manner, without scruple, are relations and friends separated, most of them never to see each other again.

I remember, in the vessel in which I was brought over, in the men's apartment,
there were several brothers, who, in the sale, were sold in different lots; and it was
very moving on this occasion, to see and hear their cries at parting. O, ye nominal
Christians! might not an African ask you—
Learned you this from your God, who
says unto you, Do unto all men as you would men should do unto you? Is it not
enough that we are torn from our country and friends, to toil for your luxury and
lust of gain? Must every tender feeling be likewise sacrificed to your avarice? Are the
dearest friends and relations, now rendered more dear by their separation from their
kindred, still to be parted from each other, and thus prevented from cheering the
gloom of slavery, with the small comfort of being together, and mingling their
sufferings and sorrows? Why are parents to lose their children, brothers their sisters,
or husbands their wives? Surely, this is a new refinement in cruelty, which, while it

or husbands their wives? Surely, this is a new refinement in cruelty, which, while it

has no advantage to atone for it, thus aggravates distress, a nd adds fresh horrors even to the wretchedness of slavery.

CHAPTER 18

THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION AND GLOBAL IMPACT

During the seventeenth century, major scientific discoveries occurred in Western Europe, along with increasingly precise statements of the ge neral scientific method.

Western science built on earlier contacts, particularly with A rab science, but now it pressed further. Some discoveries provided Europeans with an understanding scientists in other societies had assumed for some time—for example, that the earth is not the center of the universe. Others provided brand new knowledge. Along with the specific findings came an excitement about science, a b elief (among some) that science should serve as the centerpiece for al knowledge—and these features had never before developed in any culture, despite important sci entific traditions dating back many centuries.

The scientific revolution, and the disputes it roused, particul arly with religious authorities, quickly had major impact within Europe. Religion declined, though it hardly disappeared. Scientific approaches began to be appli ed to social topics, as wel as topics in the physical universe. New relationships bet ween science and technological innovation began to develop. Much of this ext

ension occurred during
the eighteenth century, in the Enlightenment.

Ultimately, Western science would spread widely, and indee d many societies
would begin to contribute to modern scientific work. During the early modern
period, however, reactions were somewhat more mixed and tentative. The Ottoman
Empire, for example, with a proud scientific tradition of its o wn, hesitated to import
much Western science. Japan, fairly isolated cultural y durin g the seventeenth
century, began to al ow translations of Western scientific wo rk after about 1720; the
Japanese encountered this work through their trading conta cts with the Dutch.

China, again with an important scientific tradition of its own, maintained some
contact with Western discoveries but would not begin to inc orporate them
thoroughly until the late nineteenth century. Russia (see cha pter 19) by the
eighteenth century tried actively to import new kinds of scie ntific training.

The documents that fol ow highlight some of the key feature s of the scientific
revolution itself. They also al ow consideration of several diff erent reactions, where
comparison becomes essential. They help explain why the n ew science, though
Western in origin, would ultimately spur global changes in in tel ectual life and in education.

Questions

1. How did the new science relate to established religion in Western Europe? How
did scientists seek to deal with religious objections?

2. What kind of broader intel ectual attitudes did the scientif ic revolution encourage?

3. What was new about the Enlightenment idea of progress?

4. What advantages did Japanese intel ectuals begin to see i n Western science? How
did this science seem to relate to their own traditions?

5. Why did many Ottoman officials hesitate to embrace Wes tern science?

6. What was the early modern Chinese interaction with West ern science? Why did it

6. What was the early modern Chinese interaction with West ern science? Why did it
not immediately lead to broader incorporation of modern sci ence?

7. Why did some societies open up to Western science earlie r than others?

For Further Discussion

1. How did Western science affect interregional cultural cont acts? How would it
affect Western attitudes toward other parts of the world?

2. Why might Russia or Japan take an earlier interest in West ern science than China or the Ottoman empire?

3. To what extent has modern science led to religious declin
e in world history during the past three centuries?

GALILEO

Galileo, an Italian scientist of the early seventeenth century, made major discoveries about gravity and about planetary motion. He also suggested some of the intel ectual style that could accompany the new science. His clashes with the Church ultimately landed him in prison, though in fairly luxurious conditions. The fol owing letter was written in 1617.

• • •

GALILEO'S LETTER TO THE GRAND DUCHESS OF TUSCANY

To the Most Serene Grand Duchess Mother:

Some years ago, as Your Serene Highness wel knows, I discovered in the heavens many things that had not been seen before our own age. The novelty of these things, as wel as some consequences which fol owed from them in contradiction to the physical notions commonly held among academic philosophers, stirred up against me no smal number of professors—as if I had placed these things in the sky with my own hands in order to upset nature and overturn the sciences. They seemed to forget that the increase of known truths stimulates the investigation, establishment, and growth of the arts; not their diminution or destruction.

From Modern History Sourcebook, http://www.fordham.edu/halsal *mod*galileo-tuscany.html.

Showing a greater fondness for their own opinions than for t ruth they
sought to deny and disprove the new things which, if they h ad cared to look
for themselves, their own senses would have demonstrated to them. To this
end they hurled various charges and published numerous wr itings fil ed with
vain arguments, and they made the grave mistake of sprinkl ing these with
passages taken from places in the Bible which they had faile d to understand properly, and which were il -
suited to their purposes.

These men would perhaps not have fal en into such error ha d they but
paid attention to a most useful doctrine of St. Augustine’s, r elative to our
making positive statements about things which are obscure and hard to
understand by means of reason alone. Speaking of a certain physical
conclusion about the heavenly bodies, he wrote: “Now keepi ng always our
respect for moderation in grave piety, we ought not to belie ve anything
inadvisedly on a dubious point, lest in favor to our error we c onceive a
prejudice against something that truth hereafter may reveal to be not
contrary in any way to the sacred books of either the Old or the New

contrary in any way to the sacred books of either the Old or the New Testament.”

Wel , the passage of time has revealed to everyone the trut hs that I
previously set forth; and, together with the truth of the facts , there has come
to light the great difference in attitude between those who si mply and
dispassionately refused to admit the discoveries to be true, and those who
combined with their incredulity some reckless passion of the ir own. Men
who were wel grounded in astronomical and physical scienc e were
persuaded as soon as they received my first message. Ther e were others who
denied them or remained in doubt only because of their nov el and
unexpected character, and because they had not yet had th e opportunity to
see for themselves. These men have by degrees come to be satisfied. But
some, besides al egiance to their original error, possess I kn ow not what
fanciful interest in remaining hostile not so much toward the things in
question as toward their discoverer. No longer being able to deny them,
these men now take refuge in obstinate silence, but being m ore than ever
exasperated by that which has pacified and quieted other m en, they divert
their thoughts to other fancies and seek new ways to damag e me.

I should pay no more attention to them than to those who pr eviously contradicted me–
at whom I always laugh, being assured of the eventual

outcome—
were it not that in their new calumnies and persecutions I perceive that they do not stop at proving themselves more learned than I am
(a claim which I scarcely contest), but go so far as to cast against me the
imputations of crimes which must be, and are, more abhorrent to me than
death itself. I cannot remain satisfied merely to know that the injustice of
this is recognized by those who are acquainted with these men and with me, as perhaps it is not known to others.

Persisting in their original resolve to destroy me and everything mine by
any means they can think of, these men are aware of my views in astronomy
and philosophy. They know that as to the arrangement of the parts of the
universe, I hold the sun to be situated motionless in the center of the
revolution of the celestial orbs while the earth revolves about the sun. They
know also that I support this position not only by refuting the arguments of
Ptolemy and Aristotle, but by producing many counter-arguments; in
particular, some which relate to physical effects whose causes can perhaps
be assigned in no other way. In addition there are astronomical arguments
derived from many things in my new celestial discoveries that plainly
confute the Ptolemaic system [the system that held the earth to be center of
the universe] while admirably agreeing with and confirming

the contrary
hypothesis. Possibly because they are disturbed by the kno
wn truth of other
propositions of mine which differ from those commonly held,
 and therefore
mistrusting their defense so long as they confine themselve
s to the field of
philosophy, these men have resolved to fabricate a shield fo
r their fal acies
out of the mantle of pretended religion and the authority of t
he Bible. These
they apply with little judgment to the refutation of argument
s that they do
not understand and have not even listened to….

CONDORCET AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT IDEA OF PROGRESS

Condorcet was a French aristocrat and an eager participant i
n the Enlightenment.

His Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Hum
an Mind (1793)

His Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Hum
an Mind (1793)
extended the implications of the new science. Ironical y, Con
dorcet was arrested
during the radical phase of the French Revolution and comm
itted suicide rather than wait for execution.

• • •

No one has ever believed that the human mind could exhau
st al the facts of nature,
al the refinements of measuring and analyzing these facts,
the interrelationship of
objects, and al the possible combinations of ideas….

But because, as the number of facts known increases, man l earns to classify them,
to reduce them to more general terms; because the instrum ents and the methods of
observation and exact measurement are at the same time r eaching a new precision;

… the truths whose discovery has cost the most effort, whic h at first could be
grasped only by men capable of profound thought, are soon carried further and
proved by methods that are no longer beyond the reach of o rdinary intel igence. If
the methods that lead to new combinations are exhausted, i f their application to
problems not yet solved requires labors that exceed the tim e or the capacity of
scholars, soon more general methods, simpler means, come to open a new avenue for genius.…

• • •

Applying these general reflections to the different sciences, we shal give, for each,
examples of their successive improvement that wil leave no doubt as to the
certainty of the future improvements we can expect. We sha l indicate particularly
the most likely and most imminent progress in those science s that are now
commonly believed to be almost exhausted. We shal point out how more universal
education in each country, by giving more people the eleme ntary knowledge that
can inspire them with a taste for more advanced study and give them the capacity

for making progress in it, can add to such hopes; how [these hopes] increase even more, if a more general prosperity permits a greater number of individuals to pursue studies, since at present, in the most enlightened countries, hardly a fiftieth part of those men to whom nature has given talent receive the education necessary to make use of their talents; and that, therefore, the number of men destined to push back the frontiers of the sciences by their discoveries will grow in the same proportion [as universal education increases].

We shall show how this equality of education, and the equality that will arise between nations, will speed up the advances of those sciences whose progress depends on observations repeated in greater number over a larger area; all that mineralogy, botany, zoology, meteorology can be expected to gain thereby; and finally what an enormous disproportion exists, in these sciences, between the weakness of the means that nevertheless have led us to so many useful and important truths, and the great scope of the means men will in the future be able to deploy.

• • •

If we now turn to the mechanical arts, we shall see that their progress can have no other limit than the reach of the scientific theories on which they depend; that the methods of these arts are capable of the same improvement, the same

simplifications as methods in the sciences. Instruments, ma chines, looms wil increasingly supplement the strength and skil of men; wil a ugment at the same time the perfection and the precision of manufactures by les sening both the time and the labor needed to produce them. Then the obstacles t hat stil impede this

and the labor needed to produce them. Then the obstacles t hat stil impede this progress wil disappear, and along with them accidents that wil become preventable and unhealthy conditions in general, whether owing to work, or habits, or climate.

Then a smal er and smal er area of land wil be able to prod uce commodities of greater use or higher value; wider enjoyment wil be obtaine d with less outlay; the same manufacturing output wil cal for less expenditure of r aw materials or wil be more durable. For each kind of soil people wil know how to choose, from among crops that satisfy the same kind of need, those crops that ar e most versatile, those that satisfy [the needs of a greater mass of users, requiring l ess labor and less real consumption. Thus, without any sacrifice, the methods of co nservation and of economy in consumption wil fol ow the progress of the art o f producing the various commodities, preparing them and turning them into manufa ctures.

Thus not only wil the same amount of land be able to feed more people; but each
of them, with less labor, wil be employed more productively and wil be able to satisfy his needs better.

• • •

But in this progress of industry and prosperity… each gener ation … is destined to
ful er enjoyment; and hence, as a consequence of the physi cal constitution of the
human species, to an increase of the population. Wil there not come a time when…

the increase in population surpassing its means of subsisten ce, the result would necessarily be—
if not a continuous decline in wel being and number of peopl e, a truly retrograde movement—
at least a kind of oscil ation between good and bad?

Would not such oscil ations in societies that have reached th is point be an ever-
present cause of more or less periodic suffering? Would this not mark the limit
beyond which al improvement would become impossible…?

No one wil fail to see how far removed from us this time is; but wil we reach it
one day. It is impossible to speak for or against an event tha t wil occur only at a
time when the human species wil necessarily have acquired knowledge that we
cannot even imagine. And who, in fact, would dare to predic t what the art of
converting the elements to our use may one day become?

But supposing a limit were reached, nothing terrible would happen, regarding either the happiness or the indefinite perfectibility of mankind. We must also suppose that before that time, the progress of reason will have gone hand in hand with progress in the arts and sciences; that the ridiculous prejudices of superstition will no longer cover morality with an austerity that corrupts and degrades it instead of purifying and elevating it. Men will know then that if they have obligations to beings who do not yet exist, these obligations do not consist in giving life, but in giving happiness. Their object is the general welfare of the human species, of the society in which people live, of the family to which they belong and not the puerile idea of filling the earth with useless and unhappy beings. The possible quantity of the means of subsistence could therefore have a limit, and consequently so could the attainable level of population, without resulting in the destruction … of part of the living.

Among the progress of the human mind that is most important for human happiness, we must count the entire destruction of the prejudices that have established inequality between the sexes, fatal even to the sex it favors. One would look in vain for reasons to justify it, by differences in physical constitution, intelligence, moral sensibility. This inequality has no other source but the abuse of power, and men have tried in vain to excuse it by sophisms.

We shal show how much the destruction of customs authori zed by this prejudice,
of the laws it has dictated, can contribute to the greater hap piness of families, and
to the spread of the domestic virtues, the first foundation of al other virtues. It wil
promote the progress of education, because [education] wil be extended to both
sexes more equal y, and because education cannot become general, even among
men, without the cooperation of mothers.

• • •

Al these causes of the improvement of the human species, al these means that
assure it, wil by their nature act continuously and acquire a constantly growing
momentum. We have explained the proofs of this…; we coul d therefore already
conclude that the perfectibility of man is unlimited, even tho ugh, up to now, we
have only supposed him endowed with the same natural fac ulties and organization.

What then would be the certainty and extent of our hopes if we could believe that
these natural faculties themselves and this organization are also susceptible of
improvement? This is the last question remaining for us to e xamine.

The organic perfectibility or degeneration of races in plants and animals may be
regarded as one of the general laws of nature.

This law extends to the human species; and certainly no one wil doubt that progress in medical conservation [of life], in the use of healthier food and housing, a way of living that would develop strength through exercise without impairing it by excess, and finaly the destruction of the two most active causes of degradation—

misery and too great wealth—wil prolong the extent of life and assure people more constant health as wel as a more robust constitution. We feel that the progress of preventive medicine as a preservative, made more effective by the progress of reason and social order, wil eventualy banish communicable or contagious illnesses and those diseases in general that originate in climate, food, and the nature of work. It would not be difficult to prove that this hope should extend to almost al other diseases, whose more remote causes wil eventualy be recognized. Would it be absurd now to suppose that the improvement of the human race should be regarded as capable of unlimited progress? That a time wil come when death would result only from extraordinary accidents or the more and more gradual wearing out of vitality, and that, finaly, the duration of the average interval between birth and wearing out has itself no specific limit whatsoever? No doubt man wil not become immortal, but cannot the span constantly increase between the moment he begins to

live and the time when natural y, without il ness or accident, he finds life a burden?

FATHER DE HALDE AND SCIENCE IN CHINA

Father de Halde was a Catholic missionary who discussed sci ence at the court of the Qing emperor, in the late seventeenth century. His comment s date from around 1680. Catholic missionaries had long sought to interest Chin ese officials in science and in specific technologies like Western clocks, as a means of winning opportunities for direct missionary work. Is this account an accurate repre sentation of Chinese reactions?

• • •

This nation, natural y proud, looked upon themselves as the most learned in the world, and they enjoyed this reputation without disturbance because they were acquainted with no other people more knowing than themse lves; but they were undeceived by the ingenuity of the missionaries who appear ed at court. The proof

undeceived by the ingenuity of the missionaries who appear ed at court. The proof which they gave of their capacity served greatly to authoriz e their ministry and to gain esteem for the religion which they preached. The late e mperor, Kang xi, whose chief delight was to acquire knowledge, was never weary of seeing or hearing them.

On the other hand, the Jesuits, perceiving how necessary th e protection of this great
prince was to the progress of the Gospel, omitted nothing th at might excite his
curiosity and satisfy this natural relish for the sciences.

From Eva March Tappan, ed., The World's Story. Vol. 1, China , Japan, and the
Islands of the Pacific (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), 155–62.

They gave him an insight into optics by making him a prese nt of a semi-cylinder
of a light kind of wood. In the middle of its axis was placed a convex glass, which,
being turned toward any object, painted the image within th e tube to a great nicety.

The emperor was greatly pleased with so unusual a sight, an d desired to have a
machine made in his garden at Peking, wherein, without bei ng seen himself, he
might see everything that passed in the streets and neighbo ring places. They prepared for this purpose an object-
glass of much greater diameter, and made in the
thickest garden wal a great window in the shape of a pyram id, the basis of which
was towards the garden, and the point toward the street. At the point they fixed the
glass eye over against the place where there was the greate st concourse of people; at
the basis was made a large closet, shut up close to al sides and very dark. It was
there the emperor came with his queens to observe the livel y images of everything
that passed in the street; and this sight pleased him extrem

ely; but it charmed the
princesses a great deal more, who could not otherwise beho ld this spectacle, the
custom of China not al owing them to go out of the palace. [Another missionary]

gave another wonderful spectacle by his skil in optics in the Jesuits' Garden at
Peking, which greatly astonished the grandees of the emper or. They made upon four
wal s four human figures, every one being of the same lengt h as the wal , which was
fifty feet. As he had perfectly observed the optic rules, there was nothing seen on the
front but mountains, forests, chases, and other things of this nature; but at a certain
point they perceived the figure of a man wel made and wel -proportioned. The
emperor honored the Jesuits' house with his presence, and b eheld these figures a
long time with admiration. The grandees and principal mand arins, who came in
crowds, were equal y surprised; but that which struck them most was to see the
figures so regular and so exact upon irregular wal s that in s everal places had large
windows and doors. In catoptrics they presented the empero r with al sorts of
telescopes, as wel for astronomical observations as for taki ng great and smal
distances upon the earth; and likewise glasses for diminishin g, magnifying, and
multiplying. Among other things, they presented him with a tube made like a prism
having eight sides, which being placed paral el with the hori zon, presented eight

different scenes so lifelike that they might be mistaken for t
he objects themselves;
this being joined to the variety of painting entertained the e
mperor a long time.

They likewise presented another tube wherein was a polygo
n glass, which by its
different facets col ected into one image several parts of diff
erent objects, insomuch
that instead of a landscape, woods, flocks, and a hundred ot
her things represented in
a picture, there was seen distinctly a human face or some ot
her figure very exact.

There was also another machine which contained a lighted l
amp, the light of which
came through a tube, at the end whereof was a convex glas
s, near which several
smal pieces of glass painted with divers figures were made
to slide. These figures
were seen upon the opposite wal of a size proportioned to t
he size of the wal . This
spectacle in the nighttime or in a very dark place frightened
 those who were
ignorant of the artifice as much as it pleased those who wer
e acquainted with it.

ignorant of the artifice as much as it pleased those who wer
e acquainted with it.

[The missionaries also] offered the emperor a machine the p
rincipal parts of which
were only four notched wheels and an iron grapple. With the
 help of this machine, a
child raised several thousand weight without difficulty, and s
tood firm against the

efforts of twenty strong men. With respect to hydrostatics, t hey made for the
emperor pumps, canals, siphons, wheels, and several other machines proper to raise
water out of the river, cal ed the ten thousand springs, and t o carry it into the
ground belonging to the emperor’s demesnes, as he had de sired. [They] also made a
present to the emperor of a hydraulic machine of a new typ e. There appeared in it a
clock that went very true, the motions of the heavens, and a n accurate alarm. The
pneumatic machines also did no less excite the emperor’s c uriosity. They caused a
wagon to be made of light wood about two feet long. In the middle of it they placed
a brazen vessel ful of live coals, and upon that an aeolipile, the wind of which came
through a little pipe upon a sort of wheel made like the sails of a windmil . This little wheel turned another with an axle-
tree, and by that means set the wagon in
motion for two hours together; but lest room should be want ing to proceed
constantly forward, it was contrived to move circularly in the fol owing manner: To the axle-
tree of the two hind wheels was fixed a smal beam, and at t he end of this beam another axle-
tree, which went through the center of another wheel some what larger than the rest.

They did not fail afterwards to comply with the emperor’s ta ste for great
quantities of curious things were sent out of Europe by Chris tian princes, who had
the conversion of this great empire at heart, insomuch that t he emperor’s cabinet

was soon fil ed with various rarities, especial y clocks of the most recently invented and most curious workmanship.

They also presented the emperor with thermometers to sho w the several degrees of heat and cold, to which was added a very nice hygromete r to discover the several degrees of moisture and dryness. It was a barrel of a large d iameter, suspended by a thick string made of catgut of a proper length and paral el to the horizon. The least change in the air contracts or relaxes the string, and causes the barrel to turn sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left, and stretches or loosens to the right or left upon the circumference of the barrel a smal string whic h draws a little pendulum and marks the several degrees of humidity on on e, and on the other those of dryness.

Al these different inventions of human wit, til then unknow n to the Chinese, abated something of their natural pride and taught them not to have too contemptible an opinion of foreigners; nay, it so far altered t heir way of thinking that they began to look upon Europeans as their masters.

SCIENCE IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE: LADY MONTAGUE

Lady Montague was wife of the British ambassador to the Ot toman Empire, who wrote in the early eighteenth century (her husband began hi s service in 1717). She here describes a system of inoculation against smal pox, whi ch she used on her own

children. This system was extended by Edward Jenner in Eur
ope later in the
eighteenth century, through use of a serum cultivated in cat
tle.

• • •

A propos of distempers, I am going to tel you a thing that wi
l make you wish yourself here. The smal -
pox, so fatal, and so general amongst us, is here entirely
harmless, by the invention of engrafting, which is the term t
hey give it. There is a set
of old women, who make it their business to perform the op
eration, every autumn,

of old women, who make it their business to perform the op
eration, every autumn,
in the month of September, when the great heat is abated.
People send to one
another to know if any of their family has a mind to have th
e smal -pox; they make
parties for this purpose, and when they are met (commonly
fifteen or sixteen
together) the old woman comes with a nut-
shel ful of the matter of the best sort of smal -
pox, and asks what vein you please to have opened. She im
mediately rips open
that you offer to her, with a large needle (which give you no
more pain that a
common scratch) and puts into the vein as much matter as
can lie upon the head of
her needle, and after that, binds up the little wound with a h
ol ow bit of shel , and
in this matter opens up four or five veins. The Grecians have
 commonly the
superstition of opening one in the middle of the forehead, o

ne in each arm, and one
on the breast, to mark the sign of the cross; but this has a very il effect, al these
wounds leaving little scars, and is not done by those that are not superstitious, who
cause to have them in the legs, or that part of the arm that is concealed. The
children or young patients play together al the rest of the day, and are in perfect
health to the eighth. Then the fever begins to seize them, and they keep their beds
two days, very seldom three. They have very rarely above twenty or thirty in their
faces, which never mark, and in eight days time they are as wel as before their
il ness. Where they were wounded, there remains running sores during the distemper,
which I don't doubt is a great relief to it. Every year, thousands undergo this
operation, and the French Ambassador says pleasantly, that they take the smal pox
here by way of diversion, as they take the waters in other countries. There is no
example of any one that had dies of it, and you may believe I am wel satisfied of
the safety of this experiment, since I intend to try it on my dear little son. I am
patriot enough to take the pains to bring this useful invention into fashion in
England, and I should not fail to write to some of our doctors very particularly
about it, if I knew any one of them that I thought had virtue enough to destroy such
a considerable branch of their revenue, for the good of mankind. But that distemper
is too beneficial to them, not to expose to al their resentme

nt, the hardy weight that
should undertake to put an end to it. Perhaps if I live to retur n, I may, however,
have courage to war with them. Upon this occasion, admire the heroism in the heart of your friend.

REACTION IN JAPAN: SUGITA GENPAKU

Sugita Genpaku, 1733–1817, was a member of the so- cal ed Dutch school, because
of his involvement in translations from Dutch scientific work s.

• • •

From Marius Jansen, The Making of Modern Japan (Cambridg e, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 213.

The corpse of the criminal was that of an old woman of abou t 50 years, nicknamed
Aocha Bab, born in Kyoto. I was an old butcher who made th e dissection. We had
been promised an eda named Toramatsu, known for his skil in dissection, but
because he was sick his grandfather came instead. He was ninety years old, but
healthy, and he told us he had been doing this since his you th. According to him up
until this time people had left it up to him, and he had not s hown them where the
lungs, kidneys, and other organs were. They would pretend t hat they had studied the
internal structure of the body directly. But the parts natural y weren’t labeled, and
they had to be satisfied with the way he pointed them out. He knew where

everything was, but he had not learned their proper names. … Some ofthe things
turned out to be arteries, veins, and suprarenal bodies accor ding to our [Dutch]

turned out to be arteries, veins, and suprarenal bodies accor ding to our [Dutch]

anatomical tables. … We found that the structure of the lung s and liver and the
position and shape of the stomach were quite different from what we had believed
according to old Chinese theory. … I suggested that we deci pher the Tafel
Anatomica (the book they were using) without the aid of the interpreters in
Nagasaki, and translate it into Japanese. … the next day we met and began. …

Gradual y we got so we could decipher ten lines or more a d ay. After two or three
years of hard study everything became clear to us; the joy o f it was as the chewing of sweet sugar cane.

CHAPTER 19

THE GUNPOWDER EMPIRES

One of the great developments of the early modern period was the emergence of new land-
based empires in various parts of Asia and Eastern Europe. These are
sometimes cal ed gunpowder empires because their conque sts depended in part on
the use of cannon. They arose at the same time that Wester n Europeans were
constructing overseas empires, also using superior force. Int

erestingly, Western
Europeans were often considerably awed by the Asian empir es, whose administrative
personnel, armies, and cities far surpassed those available i n the national monarchies back home.

The documents that fol ow deal with three new empires— the Ottoman, Mughal,
and Russian. They also al involve relationships with the Wes t. Two documents come
from Western observers, noting the strengths though also so me of the constraints of
the great empires. A cluster of documents from Russia (whic h was not so highly
esteemed by Western observers) deal with efforts to use We stern contacts to effect
internal reforms around 1700. Russia's westernization, thou gh highly selective, was
in marked contrast to the lack of interest of many Asian lead ers in Western example.

The empires discussed here were dazzling at the time, durin g most of the early
modern period, clearly demonstrating superior military and political capacity. Two
of them, however, would ultimately decline: the Mughal beg an to loosen its grip by
the eighteenth century, the Ottoman by the nineteenth. And in both cases increasing
European intrusion would result. It is vital to remember the achievements that
preceded decline and that could have continuing impact in t he regions. The same
applies to Russia, which would encounter new chal enges as a multinational empire

at the end of the twentieth century though it managed to m
aintain vast holdings.

Questions

1. Why were European observers awed by the Ottoman and Mughal Empires? Were
the reasons similar or different in the two cases?

2. Why might European observers exaggerate strengths in t he empires?

3. Do the comments suggest why the Mughal Empire decline d much sooner than the Ottoman?

4. In what ways was Russia more interested in active contac ts with the West than the
Ottoman or Mughal Empires? Why was this the case?

5. What did Peter the Great seek to westernize, and what di d he leave untouched?

For Further Discussion

1. What were some significant contributions of the Ottoman and Mughal Empires to
their regions, the Middle East and India, respectively?

2. Why did the Russian Empire last longer than the other tw o empires?

3. What were some characteristic weaknesses in the gunpo wder empires?

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE: BUSBECQ

Ogier Chiselin be Busbecq, of Flemish origin (in what is now Belgium), was an
ambassador from the Holy Roman Empire to the Ottoman su ltan, in Constantinople,

ambassador from the Holy Roman Empire to the Ottoman sultan, in Constantinople, from 1555 to 1562. His letters provide important data on the Ottomans. He was, however, eager to see reform in the Holy Roman Empire, and actively shaped his observations of the Ottoman Empire to encourage change back home.

• • •

At Buda I made my first acquaintance with the Janissaries; this is the name by which the Turks call the infantry of the royal guard. The Turkish state has 12,000 of these troops when the corps is at its full strength. They are scattered through every part of the empire, either to garrison the forts against the enemy, or to protect the Christians and Jews from the violence of the mob. There is no district with any considerable amount of population, no borough or city, which has not a detachment of Janissaries to protect the Christians, Jews, and other helpless people from outrage and wrong.

The Turkish monarch going to war takes with him over 400 camels and nearly as many baggage mules, of which a great part are loaded with rice and other kinds of grain. These mules and camels also serve to carry tents and armour, and likewise tools and munitions for the campaign. … The invading army carefully abstains from encroaching on its [supplies] at the outset; as they are well aware that when the

season for campaigning draws to a close, they wil have to r
etreat over districts
wasted by the enemy, or scraped bare by countless hordes of men and droves of
hungry animals, as if they had been devastated by locusts; accordingly they reserve
their stores as much as possible for this emergency.

From C. T. Forster and F. H. Daniel, eds., The Life and Letters of Ogier Chiselin de
Busbecq, vol. 1 (London: Kegan Paul, 1881) 86–88, 219–22.

From this you wil see that it is the patience, self-
denial and thrift of the Turkish
soldier that enable him to face the most trying circumstance
s and come safely out of
the dangers that surround him. What a contrast to our men! Christian soldiers on a
campaign refuse to put up with their ordinary food, and cal
for thrushes, beccaficos

[a smal bird esteemed a dainty, as it feeds on figs and grap
es], and suchlike dainty
dishes! … It makes me shudder to think of what the result of a struggle between
such different systems must be; one of us must prevail and t
he other be destroyed, at
any rate we cannot both exist in safety. On their side is the v
ast wealth of their
empire, unimpaired resources, experience and practice in ar
ms, a veteran solidery,
and uninterrupted series of victories, readiness to endure ha
rdships, union, order,
discipline, thrift and watchfulness. On ours are found an em
pty exchequer, luxurious
habits, exhausted resources, broken spirits, a raw and insub

ordinate soldiery, and
greedy quarrels; there is no regard for discipline, license run
s riot, the men indulge
in drunkenness and debauchery, and worst of al , the enemy
are accustomed to
victory, we to defeat. Can we doubt what the result must be
? The only obstacle is
Persia, whose position on his rear forces the invader to take
precautions. The fear of
Persia gives us a respite, but it is only for a time.

No distinction is attached to birth among the Turks; the defe
rence to be paid to a
man is measured by the position he holds in the public servi
ce. There is no fighting
for precedence; a man’s place is marked out by the duties h
e discharges. In making
his appointments the Sultan pays no regard to any pretensio
ns on the score of
wealth or rank, nor does he take into consideration recomm
endations or popularity,
he considers each case on its own merits, and examines car
eful y into the character,
ability, and disposition of the man whose promotion is in qu
estion. It is by merit
that men rise in the service, a system which ensures that po
sts should only be
assigned to the competent. Each man in Turkey carries in hi
s own hand his ancestry

assigned to the competent. Each man in Turkey carries in hi
s own hand his ancestry
and his position in life, which he may make or mar as he wil
. Those who receive the
highest offices from the Sultan are for the most part the son
s of shepherds or

herdsmen, and so far from being ashamed of their parentag
e, they actual y glory in
it, and consider it a matter of boasting that they owe nothin
g to the accident of
birth; for they do not believe that high qualities are either n
atural or hereditary, nor
do they think that they can be handed down from father to s
on, but that they are
partly the gift of God, and partly the result of good training,
great industry, and
unwearied zeal; arguing that high qualities do not descend f
rom a father to his son
or heir, any more than a talent for music, mathematics, or t
he like; and that the
mind does not derive its origin from the father, so that the s
on should necessarily be
like the father in character, or emanates from heaven, and t
hence infused into the
human body. Among the Turks, therefore, honours, high post
s, and judgeships are
the rewards of great ability and good service. If a man be di
shonest, or lazy, or
careless, he remains at the bottom of the ladder, an object o
f contempt; for such qualities there are no honours in Turkey.

This is the reason that they are successful in their undertaki
ngs, that they lord it
over others, and are daily extending the bounds of their em
pire. These are not our
ideas, with us there is no opening left for merit; birth is the s
tandard for everything;
the prestige of birth is the sole key to advancement in the p
ublic service.

THE MUGHAL EMPIRE: MONSERATE AND BERNIER

Antonio Monserate was a Jesuit who visited the great Emperor Akbar’s court from 1580 to 1583, at the benefit of the Mughal power. The following are excerpts from his Commentary. François Bernier, a Frenchman, was the personal physician of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb for twelve years. He wrote the first European work dealing with racial classifications of humans, and in 1684 he published his Travels to the Mughal Empire to detail his experiences in India.

• • •

MONSERATE

This Prince is of a stature and type of countenance wel fitte
d to his royal dignity, so
that one could easily recognize even at first glace that he is
the king.... His forehead
is broad and open, his eyes so bright and flashing that they
seem like a sea
shimmering in the sunlight.... He creates an opportunity alm
ost every day for any of
the common people or of the nobles to see him and convers
e with him. It is
remarkable how great an effect this courtesy and affability h
as in attaching to him
the minds of his subjects ... he has an acute insight, and sho
ws much wise foresight
both in avoiding dangers and in seizing favorable opportunit
ies for carrying out his
designs.... Unlike the palaces built by other Indian kings, his
are lofty [and] their
total circuit is so large that it easily embraces four great roy
al dwel ings.... Not a
little is added to the beauty of the palaces by charming pige
on cotes.... The pigeons
are cared for by eunuch and servant maids. Their evolutions
are control ed at wil ,
when they are flying, by means of certain signals, just as th
ose of a wel trained
soldiery.... It wil seem little short of miraculous when I affir
m that when sent out
they dance, turn somersaults al together in the air, flying or
derly rhythm, and
return to their starting point, al at the sound of a whistle. [A
kbar's] empire is
wonderful y rich and fertile both for cultivation and pasture,

and has a great trade
both in exports and imports.... Indian towns appear very ple
asant from afar; they
are adorned with many towers and high buildings in a very b
eautiful manner. But

are adorned with many towers and high buildings in a very b
eautiful manner. But
when one enters them, one finds that the narrowness, aimle
ss crookedness and il
planning of the streets deprive these cities of al beauty.... T
he common people live
in lowly huts and tiny cottages, and hence if a traveler has s
een one of these cities, he has seen them al .

EUROPEAN AWE AT OTHER EMPIRES

BERNIER

The Moguls have left and communicated their name to the strangers that now govern Indostan, the country of the Indians; though those that are employed in public charges and offices, and even those that are listed in the militia, be not all of the race of the Moguls, but strangers and nations gathered out of all countries, most of them Persians, some Arabians, and some Turks. For, to be esteemed a mogul it is enough to be a stranger, white of face, and a Muslim; in distinction as well to the Indians, who are brown and pagans, as to the Christians of Europe, who are called Franguis [i.e., “Ferengis” or “Franks”]....

My lord, you may have seen before this, by the maps of Asia, how great every way is the extent of the empire of the Great Mogul, which is commonly called India or Indostan. I have not measured it mathematically; but to speak of it accordingly to the ordinary journeys of the country, after the rate of three whole months’ march, traversing from the frontiers of the kingdom of Golconda as far as beyond Kazni near Kandahar, which is the first town of Persia, I cannot but persuade myself otherwise but that it is at least five times as far as from Paris to Lyons—that is about five hundred common leagues....

In this same extent of country there are sundry nations which the Mogul is not

ful master of, most of them stil retaining their particular so
vereigns and lord that
neither obey him nor pay him tribute but from constraint; m
any that do little, some
that do nothing at al , and some also that receive tribute fro
m him.…

… Of the like sort are more than an hundred rajahs, or consi
derable heathen
sovereigns, dispersed through the whole empire, some near
to, others remote from,
Agra and Delhi; amongst whom there are about fifteen or six
teen that are very rich
and puissant [several of them princes]; are so great and po
werful that if they three
alone should combine they would hold him [i.e. the Great M
oghul] back; each of
them being able in a very short time to raise and bring into t
he field twenty-five
thousand horse, better troops than the Mogul’s. These caval
iers are cal ed rajipous,
or children of the rajahs. These are men who, as I have said
elsewhere, carry swords
from father to son, and to whom the rajahs al ot land on con
dition that they be
always ready to appear on horseback when the rajah comm
ands. They can endure
much hardship, and they want nothing but good order and d
iscipline to make them good soldiers.…

The Mogul is obliged to keep these rajas in his service for su
ndry reasons: the first,
because the militia of the rajahs is a very good (as we said a
bove) and because there
are rajash (as was intimated also) any one of whom can brin
g into the field above twenty-

five thousand men; the second, the better to bridle the othe r rajahs and to
reduce them to reason, when they cantonize, or when they r efuse to pay tribute, or
when, out of fear or other cause, they wil not leave their co untry to serve in the
army when the Mogul requires it; the third, the better to nou rish jealousies and
keenness among them, by favoring and caressing one more than the other, which is
done to that degree that they proceed to fight with one anot her very frequently.

From James Harvey Robinson, ed., Readings in European His tory, vol. 2 (Boston: Ginn, 1906), 336–38.

THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE: PETER THE GREAT (1682–1725)

The first of the fol owing decrees from the czar involved the creation of a Governing
Senate (council), which reflected some of the changes he so ught in administration
and state functions. A second decree, from 1714, establishe d so-cal ed compulsory
education for the nobles (though this was not actual y ful y enforceable); a related

“instruction” urged selective study abroad. A 1721 decree (n umber 4) was designed
to encourage manufacturing, but through a very distinctive means. Final y, a 1724

decree set up an academy modeled on Western associations —such as the Royal
Society in England, which had been established in the seven teenth century—to

encourage discussion of science. Which reforms probably ha d the greatest impact?

Which would be most likely to encounter resistance? What g roups and activities were left untouched?

• • •

The ukaz [decree] should be made known. We have decreed that during our absence
administration of the country is to be [in the hands of] the G overning Senate [Peter then names its new members]....

Each gubernia [region] is to send two officials to advise the Senate on judicial and legislative matters....

In our absence the Senate is charged by this ukaz with the f ol owing:
1. To establish a just court, to deprive unjust judges of their offices and of al their
property, and to administer the same treatment to al sland erers.

2. To supervise governmental expenditures throughout the c ountry and cancel
unnecessary and, above al , useless things.

3. To col ect as much money as possible because money is t he artery of war.

4. To recruit young noblemen for officer training, especial y t hose who try to evade
it; also to select about 1,000 educated boyars for the same purpose.

5. To reform letters of exchange and keep these in one place .

6. To take inventory of goods leased to offices or gubernias.

7. To farm out the salt trade in an effort to receive some prof it [for the state].

8. To organize a good company and assign to it the China tra de.

9. To increase trade with Persia and by al possible means to attract in great
numbers Armenians [to that trade]. To organize inspectors a nd inform them of their responsibilities.

2. Education Decree

Send to every gubernia [region] some persons from mathem atical schools to teach the children of the nobility—
except those of freeholders and government clerks—

mathematics and geometry; as a penalty [for evasion] estab lish a rule that no one
wil be al owed to marry unless he learns these [subjects]. In form al prelates to
issue no marriage certificates to those who are ordered to g o to schools....

The Great Sovereign has decreed: in al gubernias children b etween the ages of ten
and fifteen of the nobility, of government clerks, and of less er officials, except those
of freeholders, must be taught mathematics and some geo metry. Toward that end,

of freeholders, must be taught mathematics and some geo metry. Toward that end,
students should be sent from mathematical schools [as teac hers], several into each

gubernia, to prelates and to renowned monasteries to establ ish schools. During their
instruction these teachers should be given food and financia l remuneration of three
altyns and two dengas per day from gubernia revenues set aside for that purpose by
personal orders of His Imperial Majesty. No fees should be co l ected from students.

When they have mastered the material, they should then be given certificates written
in their own handwriting. When the students are released th ey ought to pay one
ruble each for their training. Without these certificates they should not be al owed to
marry nor receive marriage certificates.

3. Navigation Study Abroad

1. Learn [how to draw] plans and charts and how to use the compass and other naval indicators.

2. [Learn] how to navigate a vessel in battle as wel as in a s imple maneuver, and
learn how to use al appropriate tools and instruments; nam ely sails, ropes, and
oars, and the like matters, on row boats and other vessels.

3. Discover as much as possible how to put ships to sea duri ng a naval battle. Those
who cannot succeed in this effort must diligently ascertain w hat action should
taken by the vessels that do and those that do not put to se a during such a
situation [naval battle]. Obtain from [foreign] naval officers written statements,

bearing their signatures and seals, of how adequately you [Russian students] are prepared for [naval] duties.

4. If, upon his return, anyone wishes to receive [from the Tsar] greater favors for
himself, he should learn, in addition to the above enumerated instructions, how to
construct those vessels aboard which he would like to demonstrate his skil s.

5. Upon his return to Moscow, every [foreign-
trained Russian] should bring with him
at his own expense, for which he wil later be reimbursed, at least two experienced
masters of naval science. They [the returnees] wil be assigned soldiers, one soldier
per returnee, to teach them [what they have learned abroad]. And if they do not
wish to accept soldiers they may teach their acquaintances or their own people.

The treasure wil pay for transportation and maintenance of soldiers. And if
anyone other than soldiers learns [the art of navigation] the treasurer wil pay 100

rubles for the maintenance of every such individual....

4. Right of Factories to Buy Vil ages

Previous decrees have denied merchants the right to obtain vil ages. This prohibition
was instituted because those people, outside their business, did not have any
establishments that could be of any use to the state. Nowadays, thanks to Our
decrees, as every one can see, many merchants have comp

anies and many have
succeeded in establishing new enterprises for the benefit of the state; namely: silver,
copper, iron, coal and the like, as wel as silk, linen, and woo len industries, many of
which have begun operations. As a result, by this Our ukaz a imed at the increase of
factories, We permit the nobility as wel as merchants to fre ely purchase vil ages for
these factories, with the sanction of the Mining and Manufac turing Col ege, under
one condition: that these vil ages be always integral parts of these factories.

Consequently, neither the nobility nor merchants may sel o r mortgage these vil ages
without the factories because of pressing needs, it must be done with the permission
of the Mining and Manufacturing Col ege. And whoever viola tes this procedure wil have his possessions confiscated.

And should someone try to establish a smal factory for the sake of appearance in

And should someone try to establish a smal factory for the sake of appearance in
order to purchase a vil age, such an entrepreneur should not be al owed to purchase
anything. The Mining and Manufacturing Col ege should adh ere to this rule very
strictly. Should such a thing happen, those responsible for it should be deprived of
al their movable and immovable property.

5. Founding the Academy

His Imperial Majesty decreed the establishment of an academy, wherein languages as
wel as other science and important arts could be taught, and where books could be
translated. On January 22, [1724], during his stay in the Winter Palace, His Majesty
approved the project for the Academy, and with his own hand signed a decree that
stipulates that the Academy's budget of 24,912 rubles annual y should come from
revenues from custom dues and export-
import license fees col ected in the fol owing
cities: Narva, Dorpat, Pernov and Arensburg....

Usual y two kinds of institutions are used in organizing arts and sciences. One is
known as a university; the other as an Academy or society of arts and sciences.

1. A University is an association of learned individuals who teach the young people
the development of such distinguished science as theology and jurisprudence (the
legal skil), and medicine and philosophy. An Academy, on the other hand, is an
association of learned and skil ed people who not only know their subjects to the
same degree [as their counterparts in the University] but who, in addition,
improve and develop them through research and inventions. They have no obligation to teach others.

2. While the Academy consists of the same scientific disciplines and has the same
members as the University, these two institutions, in other states, have no

connection between themselves in training many other wel - qualified people who
could organize different societies. This is done to prevent int erference into the
activity of the Academy, whose sole task is to improve arts a nd science through
theoretical research that would benefit professors as wel as students of
universities. Freed from the pressure of research, universitie s can concentrate on educating the young people.

3. Now that an institution aimed at the cultivation of arts an d sciences is to be
chartered in Russia, there is no need to fol ow the practice t hat is accepted in
other states. It is essential to take into account the existing circumstances of this
state [Russia], consider [the quality of Russian] teachers and students, and
organize such an institution that would not only immediately increase the glory of
this [Russian] state through the development of sciences, bu t would also, through
teaching and dissemination [of knowledge], benefit the peo ple [of Russia] in the future.

4. These two aims wil not be realized if the Academy of Scie nces alone is chartered,
because while the Academy may try to promote and dissemi nate arts and sciences,
these wil not spread among the people. The establishment of a university wil do
even less, simply because there are no elementary schools, gymnasia or seminaries

[in Russia], where young people could learn the fundamentals before studying more advanced subjects [at the University] to make themselves useful. It is therefore inconceivable that under these circumstances a university would be of some value [to Russia].

5. Consequently what is needed most [in Russia] is the establishment of an institution that would consist of the most learned people, who, in turn, would be willing: (a) to promote and perfect the sciences while at the same time, wherever

willing: (a) to promote and perfect the sciences while at the same time, wherever possible, be willing (b) to give public instruction to young people (if they feel the latter are qualified) and (c) instruct some people individually so that they in turn could train young people [of Russia] in the fundamental principles of all sciences.

CHAPTER 20

COFFEE IN EARLY MODERN WORLD HISTORY

One of the key features of the early modern period involved the circulation of new goods among different regions, and the related development of new consumer tastes.

Tobacco, cotton, and silver, and their literally global exchange, began to play serious roles in shaping world history—through consumption, production, and trade, and the regional relationships involved.

Coffee was a major player as wel . Native to northeastern Af rica, it spread
initial y through the Middle East during the sixteenth centur y. Europeans
encountered it there, and coffee enjoyed growing popularity from the seventeenth
century onward. In both regions, and later more widely stil , coffee affected not only
personal consumption but also, potential y, health and sleep and, above al , new
patterns of sociability and exchange of news and views.

Coffee was also controversial—
like many novel products, but with some
particularly interesting disputes and debates. The fol owing documents, from the
Middle East and Europe, suggest key issues in coffee’s progr ess. They must be
compared, so that we can get at the nature of clashing view points. They must be
subtly analyzed, so that we can look between the lines of th e critiques to assess
coffee’s impact. And of course they invite consideration of t he relationship between
Middle Eastern and European patterns.

Questions

1. What were some of the main objections to coffee?

2. Why did coffee gain steadily in popularity?

3. Were there significant differences between coffee's early history in the Middle East
and that in Western Europe? What might account for major differences and similarities?

4. What were some of the political and social implications of coffee? Were there also gender implications?

5. What types of people opposed coffee, and why? What typ es of people favored it?

For Further Discussion

1. Is a humble product like coffee a significant subject for wo rld history?

2. To what extent did attacks on coffee fail, and why?

3. Did the spread of coffee relate to other significant develo pments in early modern Middle Eastern or European history?

4. Does the history of coffee suggest analogies to reactions t o other kinds of new products, either in the past or today?

A MIDDLE EASTERN ACCOUNT

This selection comes from an Arab manuscript written in the seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

Schehabeddin Ben, an Arabian author of the ninth century o f the Gegira, or fifteenth

of the Christians, attributes to Gemaleddin, Mufti of Aden [th
e Arabian Gulf], who

of the Christians, attributes to Gemaleddin, Mufti of Aden [th
e Arabian Gulf], who
was nearly his contemporary, the first introduction into that country, of drinking
Coffee. He tel s us, that Gemaleddin, having occasion to tra vel into Persia, during his
abode there, saw some of his countrymen drinking Coffee, w hich at that time he did
not much attend to; but, on his return to Aden, finding hims elf indisposed, and
remembering that he had seen his countrymen drinking Coff ee in Persia, in hopes of
reviving some benefit from it, he determined to try it on him self; and, after making
the experiment, not only recovered his health, but perceived other useful qualities in
that liquor; such as relieving the headache, enlivening the s pirits, and, without
prejudice to the constitution, preventing drowsiness. This las t quality he resolved to
turn to the advantage of his profession: he took it himself, a nd recommended it to
the Dervishes, or religious Muslims, to enable them to pass t he night in prayer, and
other exercises of their religions, with greater zeal and atten tion. Soon men of
letters, and persons belonging to the law, adopted the use o f it. These were fol owed
by the tradesmen, and artisans that were under a necessity of working in the night,
and such as were obliged to travel later after sunset. At leng th the custom become
general in Aden; and it was not only drunk in the night by th

ose who were desirous
of being kept awake, but in the day for the sake of its other agreeable qualities.

Coffee, being thus received at Aden, where it has continued in use ever since
without interruption, passed by degrees to many neighborin g towns; and not long
after reached Mecca, where it was introduced, as at Aden, b y the Dervishes, and for
the same purposes of religion. The inhabitants of Mecca, we re at last so fond of this
liquor, that, without regarding the intention of the religious, and other studious
persons, they at length drank it publicly in coffeehouses, wh ere they assembled in
crowds to pass the time agreeably, making that the pretens e: here they played at
chess, and such other kind of games, and that even for mon ey. In these houses they
amused themselves likewise with singing, dancing, and mus ic, contrary to the
manners of the rigid Muslims, which afterwards was the occ asion of some disturbances.

From John El is, A Historical Account of Coffee with an Engra ving, and Botanical
Description of the Tree (London: Edward and Charles Dil y, 1 774).

From hence the custom extended itself to many other towns of Arabia, and
particularly to Medina, and then to Grand Cairo in Egypt.

But at length the rigid Muslims began to disapprove the use of Coffee, as

occasioning frequent disorders, and too nearly resembling w ine in its effects; the
drinking of which is contrary to the tenets of their religion. G overnment was
therefore obliged to interfere, and at times refrain from the use of it. However, it
had become so universal y liked, that it was found afterward s necessary to take off al restraint for the future.

[By 1554 coffee reached Constantinople, and two Syrian me rchants] sold Coffee
publicly, in rooms fitted up in an elegant manner; which wer e presently frequented
by men of learning, and particularly poets and other persons , who came to amuse
themselves with a game of chess, or draughts; or to make a cquaintance, and pass
their time agreeably at smal expense.

These houses and assemblies insensibly became so much in vogue, that they were
frequented by people of al professions, and even by the offi cers of the ferablio, the
pachas, and persons of the first rank about the court. Howev er, when they seemed to
be the most firmly established, the Imans, or officers of the Mosques, complained
loudly of their being deserted, while the Coffeehouses were ful of company....

The chief of the Law ... pronounced that the drinking of Coff ee was contrary to

The chief of the Law ... pronounced that the drinking of Coff ee was contrary to
the law of Mohammed. Immediately al the Coffeehouses we

re shut, and the officers
of the police were commanded to prevent any one from drin
king coffee. However,
the habit was become so strong, and the use of it so general
y agreeable, that the
people continued, notwithstanding al prohibitions, to drink i
t in their own houses.

The officers of the police, seeing they could not suppress th
e use of it, al owed… the
drinking of it, provided it was not done openly; so that it was
drunk in particular
places, with the doors shut, or in the back room of some of t
he shopkeepers' houses.

ENGLISH ACCOUNTS

The first selection is from The Nature of the drink Kauhi, or C
offe, and the Berry of
which it is made, Described by an Arabian Phisitian (Oxford:
Henry Hal , 1659). The
second selection is from A Character of Coffee and CoffeeHo
uses (London, 1661).

• • •

Coffee is by experience

Found to conduce to the drying of

Rheumes, and flegmatick coughes and

Distil ations, and the opening of obstructions,

And the provocation of urin

When it is dried and thoroughly boyled,

It al ayes the ebul ition of the blood,

is good against the smal poxe and measles,

and bloudy pimples; yet causeth

vertiginous headheach, and maketh lean

much, occasioneth waking, and the Emrods,

and asswageth lust, and sometimes

breeds melancholy. He that would drink

it for livelinesse sake, and to discusse

slothfulnesse, and the other properties that

we have mentioned, let him use much

sweet meates with it, and oyle of pistaccioes,

and butter. Some drink it with

milk, but it is an error, and such as may

bring in danger of the leprosy.

• • •

Six or seven years ago was [coffee] first brought into Englan
d, When the Palats of the English were as Fanatical, as Their

Brains. Like Apes, the English imitate al other people
In their ridiculous Fashions. As Slaves they submit to The

Customes even of Turky and India….

With the Barbarous Indian he smoaks Tobacco.

With the Turk he drinks Coffee.…

Even the Deserts of Arabia are ransackt for a Berry,
Which made into a drink, is as thick as puddle-water,
And ugly in colour and taste,…

‘Tis extol ed for drying up the Crudities of the
Stomack, and for expel ing Fumes out of the Head.

Excel ent Berry! Which can cleanse the English-man’s

Excel ent Berry! Which can cleanse the English-man’s
Stomak of Flegm, and expel Giddinesse out of his Head.

Yet it is certain, that for the smal space of an hour or
Thereabouts it hath expel ed out of his Head and
Stomack these infirmities. But Physicians say that
Coffee causeth the Migraine and other Giddinesses in the
Head. Of these dayly experiment may be made: For
If you set Short-hand-writers to take down the

Discourse of the Company, who prattle over Coffee, it
Wil be evident on reading the Notes, that the talk is
Extravagant and exactly like that of the Academians of
Bedlam, and such, as any others, would be ashamed of
But themselves.

The other sex hath just cause to curse the day, in
Which it was brought into England; Had Women any sense o
f sprit They would remonstrate to his Majestie, that Men in
Former times were more able, than now,…

Men drink so [much]

They are grown as impotent as Age, as dry and as
Unfruitful, as the Deserts of Africk.…

In this Age Men tattle more than Women,

And particularly at the Coffeehouse, when the number hath Been but six, five of them have talked at one time. The Company here have out-talk'd an equal number of

Gossipping Women, and made a greater noise than a Bake-house.

The Relater hereof hath heard

A young gentleman affirm, that he used to go to the Coffeeh ouse Purposely to vent his strange and wild Conceits,…

[An] opinion, how foolish or fond soever,

Here received entertainment.…

TWO DESCRIPTIONS OF ENGLISH COFFEE HOUSES

The first description is from 1673, the second from 1675.

• • •

THE CHARACTER OF A COFFEEHOUSE, 1673 A.D.

A coffeehouse is a lay conventicler, good-
fel owship turned puritan, il -husbandry in
masquerade, whither people come, after toping al day, to p urchase, at the expense
of their last penny, the repute of sober companions: A Rota [i.e. club room], that,
like Noah's ark, receives animals of every sort, from the pre cise diminutive band, to
the hectoring cravat and cuffs in folio; a nursery for training up the smal er fry of
virtuosi in confident tattling, or a cabal of knitting [i.e. carpi

ng] critics that have
only learned to spit and mew; a mint of intel igence, that, to make each man his
pennyworth, draws out into petty parcels, what the merchan t receives in bul ion: he,
that comes often, saves twopence a week in Gazettes, and has his news and his
coffee for the same charge, as at a threepenny ordinary the y give in broth to your
chop of mutton; it is an exchange, where haberdashers of p olitical smal -wares meet,
and mutual y abuse each other, and the public, with bottoml ess stories, and heedless
notions; the rendezvous of idle pamphlets, and persons mor e idly employed to read
them; a high court of justice, where every little fel ow in a ca mlet cloak takes upon

them; a high court of justice, where every little fel ow in a ca mlet cloak takes upon
him to transpose affairs both in church and state, to show re asons against acts of
parliament, and condemn the decrees of general councils.

From Charles W. Colby, ed., Selections from the Sources of E nglish History, B.C.

55–A.D. 1832 (London: Longmans, Green, 1920), 208–
12. Text modernized by Jerome S. Arkenberg.

COFFEEHOUSES VINDICATED, 1675 A.D.

Though the happy Arabia, nature’s spicery, prodigal y furnis hes the voluptuous
world with al kinds of aromatics, and divers other rarities; y et I scare know whether

mankind be not stil as much obliged to it for the excel ent fr uit of the humble coffee-
shrub, as for any other of its more specious productions: for, since there is
nothing we here enjoy, next to life, valuable beyond health, certainly those things
that contribute to preserve us in good plight and eucrasy (su ch a due mixture of
qualities as constitutes health), and fortify our weak bodies against the continual
assaults and batteries of disease, deserve our regards much more than those which
only gratify a liquorish palate, or otherwise prove subservien t to our delights. As for
this salutiferous berry, of so general a use through al the re gions of the east, it is
sufficiently known, when prepared, to be moderately hot, an d of a very drying
attenuating and cleansing quality; whence reason infers, tha t its decoction must
contain many good physical properties, and cannot but be a n incomparable remedy
to dissolve crudities, comfort the brain, and dry up il humor s in the stomach. In
brief, to prevent or redress, in those that frequently drink it, al cold drowsy
rheumatic distempers whatsoever, that proceed from excess of moisture, which are
so numerous, that but to name them would tire the tongue o f a mountebank.

Lastly, for diversion. Now, whither shal a person, wearied wi th hard study, or the
laborious turmoils of a tedious day, repair to refresh himself ? Or where can young
gentlemen, or shopkeepers, more innocently and advantage

ously spend an hour or
two in the evening, than at a coffeehouse? Where they shal
be sure to meet
company, and, by the custom of the house, not such as at o
ther places, stingy and
reserved to themselves, but free and communicative; where
every man may modestly
begin his story, and propose to, or answer another, as he thi
nks fit.

In brief, it is undeniable, that, as you have here the most civ
il, so it is, general y,
the most intel igent society; the frequenting whose converse
, and observing their
discourses and deportment, cannot but civilize our manners,
enlarge our
understanding, refine our language, teach us a generous co
nfidence and handsome
mode of address, and brush off the pudor rubrusticus (as, I r
emember, Tul y
somewhere cal s it), that clownish kind of modesty frequentl
y incident to the best
natures, which render them sheepish and ridiculous in comp
any.

PART IV

The Long Nineteenth Century

BEGINNING ABOUT 1750, changes in Europe’s economy and
politics began to create the
conditions for another reshaping of the framework of world
history. Some elements of this reshaping—
the rise of industry and new kinds of powered equipment, fo
r example, or new ideals of democracy—
stil persist today. But the changes initial y

generated a surge of European power in the world that has not endured in ful force.

In this sense a world history period that begins with Europea n revolutions in the eighteenth century and ends in 1914, on the eve of Europe's relative decline in world affairs, constitutes an obviously coherent unit. Many historia ns cal this period the long nineteenth century. With the long nineteenth century, i n other words, the world's industrial era began, and it is stil unfolding. At the s ame time, a shorter but significant period of European dominance prevailed during t he period as wel , based on temporary monopoly of industrial power.

During the late eighteenth century the industrial revolution developed in Britain.

It featured the rise of factory industry and the use of the ne w powered machinery, with the invention of a usable steam engine being the centr al technological innovation. Industrialization fairly quickly spread to other pa rts of Western Europe and to the United States. It al owed a massive increase in th e production of goods, including new kinds of weaponry, plus more rapid systems o f transportation and communication. During the same period, a series of Western revolutions and wars of independence were also launched, stretching from the Unite d States to Western Europe and back to Latin America.

These changes helped set in motion a massive increase in t he power of the West in
the world at large. Technology and military power were cruci al. Western armies
could now defeat much larger landed forces; the naval adva ntage was enhanced as
wel . Western victories or successful intimidations in Ottoma n territory (1798), in China (1839–
42), in Japan (1853), and in Russia (1854–
55) demonstrated the new
international balance of power. Massive imperialist conquest s in Africa, Southeast
Asia, and the Pacific brought direct European control to new areas. Even Latin
America, though now technical y independent, found itself more ful y dominated by
Western commercial interests than ever before.

Massive changes in the West itself, accompanying the rise o f an industrial society
and the gradual emergence of political democracy, were ma tched, in world history,
by the need to react both to Western power and to Western values. These reactions
varied, which means that comparative issues in world histor y remain complicated.

Japan quickly saw the need to reform (though not to become Western), while China
lagged. India’s changes, as a colony, obviously differed from those of the Ottoman
Empire, which remained technical y independent though inc reasingly beleaguered.

Africa, seized late in the imperialist surge and then exploited vigorously, displayed

distinctive patterns of its own. Important new areas of the w orld, including the
United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, formed societies in many ways
Western in orientation but tempered by frontier conditions a nd an unusual mixture
of races. Attention to careful comparisons is vital in order to get reactions to early
industrialization and to Western imperialism amid very diver se settings.

This section deals with several key issues of world history in the long nineteenth
century in a number of comparative groupings. The new poli tical ideas and
revolutions that rocked the Atlantic regions from the late eig hteenth century to 1848

revolutions that rocked the Atlantic regions from the late eig hteenth century to 1848

launched the period. Comparing revolutionary ideas and so me unexpected
consequences, including the powerful modern force of natio nalism, involves Europe and the Americas alike.

Growing European power and decidedly undemocratic attitu des toward other
peoples spawned the new wave of imperialism. Europeans’ f orced entry into China,
from 1839 onward, represented the imperialist thrust while marking a tremendous—

and very difficult—
transition in Chinese history. The Chinese were forceful y op ened

to the world and at a great disadvantage. There is a clear op portunity here to compare European imperialist ideas with the reactions of a p roud but weakened civilization.

New political ideas accompanied by complex economic chan ges produced important shifts in the conditions of women, leading to new i deas and new complaints. Changes in the West, accompanying imperialis m, also caused shifts in colonial areas such as India, although westernization was in complete where women were concerned.

The end of widespread slavery (save in a few important poc kets) and harsh serfdom was one of the great events of nineteenth-century world history, extending from emancipations accompanying the revolutionary era up to the final decades of the century. Emancipations occurred in response to some of the same economic and cultural forces the world over, but the precise forms and con sequences varied. Many dissatisfactions remained, as labor was incompletely freed d espite great legal change and as existing upper classes and dominant races worked to retain key advantages.

Again, comparison helps pinpoint the crucial issues.

While industrialization was largely a Western achievement d uring the long nineteenth century, by the 1890s, both Japan and Russia ha d managed to launch significant factory industry, imitating Western patterns in pa

rt but supplying special
ingredients from their own cultural and institutional framew orks. Differences
between Japanese and Western economic styles, stil operati ve today, can be traced
to the long nineteenth century, even though Japan openly c opied the West in many
respects. Russia and Japan also generated notable resistanc e to Western values, using
nationalism to defend certain traditions and “inventing” oth ers that would help
preserve distinctive identities amid change. Here was an im portant reminder that,
even in a century of triumphant Western power, the world re mained diverse and
many societies sought the means to limit Western influence.

CHAPTER 21

THE AGE OF ATLANTIC REVOLUTIONS

This chapter and the next (on nationalism) are closely linked . Both involve major
political changes that took shape first in Europe and the Am ericas in the later
eighteenth century but exerted global impact over ensuing decades. This chapter
focuses on the revolutionary principles themselves (and obj ections to them). The
subsequent section on nationalism al ows comparison of the relationship between
the core revolutionary values and the political force that em erged alongside them.

The American Revolution, bursting forth in 1776, and the Fre nch Revolution of

1789 both enunciated universal principles of human rights. They deserve careful
comparison: similarities are obvious, but are there any suggestive differences? Two
other documents add to the comparative mix: a critique of the French Revolution,
which needs to be compared to what the revolutionaries thought they were
establishing ; and another French revolutionary document that suggests the social
force of this revolution, beyond political change.

In the wake of these revolutions, a major revolt broke out in Haiti, which
ultimately overthrew French control and abolished slavery. How do the principles of
this revolution, and objections to it, compare with the other Atlantic cases?

Questions

1. What were the shared principles of the Atlantic revolution
s? What explains their
similarities? What were the underlying definitions of human
nature and the characteristics of a good government?

2. What differences existed in the statements of rights and li
berties?

3. How does the Haitian Revolution reflect the revolutionary
process more
general y? What were some of its distinctive features?

4. How did the social aspects of the French and Haitian Revo
lutions relate to the
political goals? Were they entirely consistent, or could they r
aise some
complications with statements of rights and liberties?

5. What kinds of objections were raised to the revolutionary
principles? Did the
critics reject the revolutionary principles themselves or mer
ely the disruption and
violence of the revolutionary process? How did Burke begin t
o define a new kind of conservatism?

For Further Discussion

1. Some historians have argued that the American Revolutio
n is best interpreted as
an independence war, not a real revolution at al , if the Fren
ch revolution is used
as the standard. What was “unrevolutionary” about the Ame
rican revolution?

2. Why did the revolutionary principles, which spread so qui ckly in Europe and the
Americas, not spread more widely, to other parts of the glob e, during the same period?

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

This document emanated from the First Continental Congres s (October 1774). The
Revolutionary War had not broken out, and there was stil so me effort to reach

Revolutionary War had not broken out, and there was stil so me effort to reach
accommodation with England. But the principles that would lead to revolt and to
the construction of the later United States Constitution were clearly enunciated.

• • •

DECLARATION AND RESOLVES OF THE FIRST CONTINENTAL CONGRESS (OCTOBER 1774)
Whereas, since the close of the last war, the British parliame nt, claiming a power of
right to bind the people of America by statute in al cases w hatsoever, hath, in some
acts expressly imposed taxes on them, and in others, under various pretenses, but in
fact for the purpose of raising a revenue, hath imposed rate s and duties payable in
these colonies, established a board of commissioners with u nconstitutional powers,
and extended the jurisdiction of courts of Admiralty not only for col ecting the said

duties, but for the trial of causes merely arising within the b
ody of a county.

And whereas, in consequence of other statutes, judges who before held only
estates at wil in their offices, have been made dependent o
n the Crown alone for
their salaries, and standing armies kept in times of peace. A
nd it has lately been
resolved in Parliament, that by force of a statute made in th
e thirty-fifth year of the
reign of king Henry the Eighth, colonists may be transported in England, and tried
there upon accusations for treasons and misprisons, or conc
ealments of treasons
committed in the colonies; and by a late statute, such trials have been directed in cases therein mentioned.

And whereas, in the last session of Parliament, three statute
s were made; one
entitled “An act to discontinue, in such manner and for such time as are therein
mentioned, the landing and discharging, lading, or shipping of goods, wares and
merchandise, at the town, and within the harbor of Boston i
n the province of Massachusetts-
bay, in North America”; another, entitled “An act for the bett
er
regulating the government of the province of the Massachus
etts-bay in New
England”; and another, entitled “An act for the impartial ad
ministration of justice, in
the cases of persons questioned for any act done by them in the execution of the
law, or for the suppression of riots and tumults, in the provin
ce of the Massachusetts-

bay, in New England.” And another statute was then made, “for
making more effectual provision for the government of the p
rovince of Quebec, etc.

Al which statues are impolitic, unjust, and cruel, as wel as unconstitutional, and
most dangerous and destructive of American rights.

And whereas, Assemblies have been frequently dissolved, c
ontrary to the rights of
the people, when they attempted to deliberate on grievance
s; and their dutiful,
humble, loyal, and reasonable petitions to the crown for redr
ess, have been
repeatedly treated with contempt, by His Majesty’s minister
s of state:
The good people of the several Colonies of New Hampshire,
Massachusetts bay,
Rhode Island and Providence plantations, Connecticut, New
York, New Jersey,
Pennsylvania, Newcastle Kent and Sussex on Delaware, Mar
yland, Virginia, North
Carolina, and South Carolina, justly alarmed at these arbitra
ry proceedings of
parliament and administration, have several y elected, cons
tituted, and appointed
deputies to meet, and set in general Congress, in the city of
Philadelphia, in order to
obtain such establishment, as that their religion, laws, and li
berties, may not be subverted:

Whereupon the deputies so appointed being now assembled
, in a ful and free
representation of these Colonies, taking into their most serio
us consideration the

best means of attaining the ends aforesaid, do in the first pl ace, as Englishmen their
ancestors in like cases have usual y done, for asserting and vindicating their rights

ancestors in like cases have usual y done, for asserting and vindicating their rights and liberties, declare,

That the inhabitants of the English Colonies in North Americ a, by the immutable
laws of nature, the principles of the English constitution, and the several charters or compacts, have the fol owing rights:

1. That they are entitled to life, liberty, and property, and th ey never ceded to any
sovereign power whatever, a right to dispose of either witho ut their consent.

2. That our ancestors, who first settled these colonies, were at the time of their
emigration from the mother country, entitled to al the right s, liberties, and
immunities of free and natural born subjects within the real m of England.

3. That by such emigration they by no means forfeited, surr endered, or lost any of
those rights, but that they were, and their descendants now are entitled to the
exercise and enjoyment of al such of them, as their local an d other circumstances enable them to exercise and enjoy.

4. That the foundation of English liberty, and of al free gove rnment, is a right in the
people to participate in their legislative council: and as the E nglish colonists are
not represented, and from their local and other circumstanc

es, cannot properly be
represented in the British parliament, they are entitled to a f ree and exclusive
power of legislation in their several provincial legislatures, w here their right of
representation can alone be preserved, in al cases of taxati on and internal polity,
subject only to the negative of their sovereign, in such man ner as has been
heretofore used and accustomed. But, from the necessity of the case, and a regard
to the mutal interest of both countries, we cheerful y consen t to the operation of
such acts of the British parliament, as are bona fide restrain ed to the regulation of
our external commerce, for the purpose of securing the com mercial advantages of
the whole empire to the mother country, and the commercia l benefits of its
respective members excluding every idea of taxation, intern al or external, for
raising a revenue on the subjects in America without their c onsent.

5. That the respective colonies are entitled to the common l aw of England, and more
especial y to the great and inestimable privilege of being tri ed by their peers of the
vincinage, according to the course of that law....

6. That they have a right peaceably to assemble, consider of their grievances, and
petition the King; and that al prosecutions, prohibitory procl amations, and commitments for the same, are il egal.

7. That the keeping a Standing army in these colonies, in ti mes of peace, without the
consent of the legislature of that colony in which such army is kept, is against law.

8. It is indispensably necessary to good government, and re ndered essential by the
English constitution, that the constituent branches of the leg islature be
independent of each other; that, therefore, the exercise of le gislative power in
several colonies, by a council appointed during pleasure, by the crown, is
unconstitutional, dangerous, and destructive to the freedom of American legislation.

Al and each of which the aforesaid deputies, in behalf of the mselves, and their
constituents, do claim, demand, and insist on, as their indub itable rights and
liberties; which cannot be legal y taken from them, altered o r abridged by any
power whatever, without their own consent, by their represe ntatives in their several provincial legislatures.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

The Declaration of the Rights of Man was one of the early pr oclamations of the new
National Assembly, the body that succeeded the traditional Third Estate. It was cal ed on August 26, 1789.

• • •

DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN

The representatives of the French people, organized as a Na tional Assembly,
believing that the ignorance, neglect, or contempt of the rig hts of man are the sole
cause of public calamities and of the corruption of governm ents, have determined to
set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, unalienable, an d sacred rights of man,
in order that this declaration, being constantly before al the members of the Social
body, shal remind them continual y of their rights and dutie s; in order that the acts
of the legislative power, as wel as those of the executive po wer, may be compared
at any moment with the objects and purposes of al political institutions and may
thus be more respected, and, lastly, in order that the grieva nces of the citizens, based
hereafter upon simple and incontestable principles, shal ten d to the maintenance of
the constitution and redound to the happiness of al . Therefo re the National
Assembly recognizes and proclaims, in the presence and un der the auspices of the
Supreme Being, the fol owing rights of man and of the citize n: Articles:
From Cybercasting Services Division of the National Public T elecomputing Network.

http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/rightsof.htm.

1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social d istinctions may be founded only upon the general good.

2. The aim of al political associations is the preservation of t he natural and

imperceptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, propert y, security, and resistance to oppression.

3. The principle of al sovereignty resides essential y in the n ation. No body nor
individual may exercise any authority which does not procee d directly from the nation.

4. Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which inj ures no one else; hence
the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which
assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment o f the same rights.

These limits can only be determined by law.

5. Law can only prohibit such actions as are hurtful to societ y. Nothing may be
prevented which is not forbidden by law, and no one may be forced to do anything not provided for by law.

6. Law is the expression of the general wil . Every citizen ha s a right to participate
personal y, or through his representative, in its foundation. I t must be the same
for al , whether it protects or punishes. Al citizens, being eq ual in the eyes of the
law, are equal y eligible to al dignities and to al public posit ions and
occupations, according to their abilities, and without distinct ion except that of their virtues and talents.

7. No person shal be accused, arrested, or imprisoned exce pt in the cases and
according to the forms prescribed by law. Any one soliciting, transmitting,

executing, or causing to be executed, any arbitrary order, sh al be punished. But
any citizen summoned or arrested in virtue of the law shal s ubmit without

any citizen summoned or arrested in virtue of the law shal s ubmit without delay, as resistance constitutes an offense.

8. The law shal provide for such punishments only as are str ictly and obviously
necessary, and no one shal suffer punishment except it be l egal y inflicted in
virtue of a law passed and promulgated before the commissi on of the offense.

9. As al persons are held innocent until they shal have bee n declared guilty, if
arrest shal be deemed indispensable, al harshness not ess ential to the securing
of the prisoner’s person shal be severely repressed by law.

10. No one shal be disquieted on account of his opinions, in cluding his religious
views, provided their manifestation does not disturb the pub lic order established by law.

11. The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of t he most precious of the
rights of man. Every citizen may, accordingly, speak, write, and print with
freedom, but shal be responsible for such abuses of this fre edom as shal be defined by law.

12. The security of the rights of man and of the citizen requi res public military
forces. These forces are, therefore, established for the good of al and not for the

personal advantage of those to whom they shal be entruste
d.

13. A common contribution is essential for the maintenance
of the public forces and
for the cost of administration. This should be equitably distri
buted among al the citizens in proportion to their means.

14. Al the citizens have a right to decide, either personal y
or by their
representatives, as to the necessity of the public contributio
n; to grant this freely;
to know to what uses it is put; and to fix the proportion, the
mode of assessment
and of col ection and the duration of the taxes.

15. Society has the right to require of every public agent an
account of his administration.

16. A society in which the observance of the law is not assur
ed, nor the separation
of powers defined, has no constitution at al .

17. Since property is an inviolable and sacred right, no one s
hal be deprived thereof
except where public necessity, legal y determined, shal cle
arly demand it, and
then only on condition that the owner shal have been previ
ously and equitably indemnified.

DECREE ABOLISHING FEUDALISM

This decree, adopted official y on August 11, 1789, fol owed
from reports of
widespread peasant attacks on landed estates and manorial
 records. The goal was to

pacify the peasantry, but the results involved sweeping soci al change.

• • •

The Decree Abolishing the Feudal System, August 11, 1789

Article I. The National Assembly hereby completely abolishe s the feudal system. It
decrees that, among the existing rights and dues, [including] feudal [dues], al those
originating in or representing real or personal serfdom shal be abolished without
indemnification. Al other dues are declared redeemable, th e terms and mode of
redemption to be fixed by the National Assembly. Those of t he said dues which are
not extinguished by this decree shal continue to be col ecte d until indemnification shal take place.

From J. H. Robinson ed., Readings in European History, vol. 2 (Boston: Ginn, 1906), 404–9.

III. The exclusive right to hunt and to maintain unenclosed w arrens is likewise
abolished, and every landowner shal have the right to kil , o r to have destroyed on
his own land, al kinds of game, observing, however, such p olice regulations as may
be established with a view to the safety of the public….

IV. Al perpetual ground rents, payable either in money or in kind, of whatever
nature they may be, whatever their origin and to whomsoev er they may be due, …

shal be redeemable at a rate fixed by the Assembly. No due shal in the future be created which is not redeemable.

VI. The sale of judicial and municipal offices shal be abolished forthwith. Justice
shal be dispensed gratis. Nevertheless the magistrates at present holding such offices
shal continue to exercise their functions and to receive their emoluments until the
Assembly shal have made provision for indemnifying them.
...

IX. Pecuniary privileges, personal or real, in the payment of taxes are abolished
forever. Taxes shal be col ected from al the citizens, and from al property, in the
same manner and in the same form. Plans shal be considered by which the taxes
shal be paid proportional y by al , even for the last six months of the current years.

...

XI. Al citizens, without distinction of birth, are eligible to any office or dignity,
whether ecclesiastical, civil, or military; and no profession shal imply any derogation.

EDMUND BURKE

Edmund Burke became a pioneering spokesman for antirevolutionary conservatism,
as he increasingly attacked the French Revolution from his position in the British

House of Commons. His Reflections on the Revolution in France was published in 1790.

• • •

Abstractly speaking, government, as well as liberty, is good; yet could I, in common sense, ten years ago, have congratulated France on her enjoyment of a government (for she then had a government) without enquiry what the nature of that government was, or how it was administered? Can I now congratulate the same nation upon its freedom? Is it because liberty in the abstract may be classed amongst the blessings of mankind, that I am seriously to felicitate a madman, who has escaped from the protecting restraint and wholesome darkness of his cell, on his restoration to the enjoyment of light and liberty? Am I to congratulate a highwayman and murderer, who has broke prison, upon the recovery of his natural rights?

From Edmund Burke, Select Works of Edmund Burke, vol. 2 (London: Payne, 1876), 93–94.

When I see the spirit of liberty in action, I see a strong principle at work; and this, for a while, is all I can possibly know of it. The wild gas, the fixed air, is plainly broke loose: but we ought to suspend our judgment until the first effervescence is a little subsided, til the liquor is cleared, and until we see something deeper than the agitation of a troubled and frothy surface. I must be tolerabl

y sure, before I venture
publicly to congratulate men upon a blessing, that they hav
e real y received one.

publicly to congratulate men upon a blessing, that they hav
e real y received one.

Flattery corrupts both the receiver and the giver; and adulat
ion is not of more
service to the people than to kings. I should therefore suspe
nd my congratulations
on the new liberty of France, until I was informed how it had
been combined with
government; with public force; with the discipline and obedi
ence of armies; with the col ection of an effective and wel -
distributed revenue; with morality and religion;
with the solidity of property; with peace and order; with civil
and social manners.

Al these (in their way) are good things too; and without the
m, liberty is not a
benefit whilst it lasts, and is not likely to continue long. The
effect of liberty to
individuals is, that they may do what they please: we ought
to see what it wil please
them to do, before we risk congratulations, which may be so
on turned into
complaints. Prudence would dictate this in the case of separ
ate insulated private
men; but liberty, when men act in bodies, is power. Consider
ate people, before they
declare themselves, wil observe the use which is made of p
ower; and particularly of
so trying a thing as new power in new persons, of whose pri
nciples, tempers, and
dispositions, they have little or no experience....

THE HAITIAN REVOLUTION

The fol owing proclamation, issued by several Haitian leader s, including Jean-
Jacques Dessalines, was issued in 1803. It refers among oth er things to the
possibility of interference by France; Napoleon bitterly oppo sed the revolution,
which led to Haitian independence from France, though he was unable to act effectively.

• • •

Preliminary Declaration

Art. 1. The people inhabiting the island formerly cal ed St. D omingo, hereby agree to
form themselves into a free state sovereign and independen t of any other power in
the universe, under the name of empire of Hayti.

2. Slavery is forever abolished.

From Marcus Rainsford, An Historical Account of the Black E mpire of Hayti (London, 1805), 439–41.

3. The Citizens of Hayti are brothers at home; equality in the eyes of the law is
incontestably acknowledged, and there cannot exist any titl es, advantages, or
privileges, other than those necessarily resulting from the c onsideration and reward
of services rendered to liberty and independence.

4. The law is the same to al , whether it punishes, or whethe r it protects.

5. The law has no retroactive effect.

6. Property is sacred, its violation shal be severely prosecut ed. [But later: al
property which formerly belonged to white Frenchemen, is i ncontestably and of
right confiscated to the use of the state.]

9. No person is worthy of being a Haitian who is not a good f ather, a good son, a
good husband, and especial y a good soldier.

12. No white man of whatever nation he may be, shal put hi s foot on this
territory with the title of master or proprietor, neither shal h e in future acquire any property therein.

13. The preceding article cannot in the smal est degree affe ct white women who
have been naturalized Haytians by Government, nor does it extend to children

have been naturalized Haytians by Government, nor does it extend to children
already born, or that may be born of the said women.

14. Al [designation] of colour among the children of one an d the same

[national] family, of whom the chief magistrate is the father, being necessarily to
cease, the Haytians shal hence forward be known only by t he generic appel ation of Blacks.

Of Worship

50. The law admits of no predominant religion.

51. The freedom of worship is tolerated.

52. The state does not provide for the maintenance of any r eligious institution, nor or any minister.

FROM A FRENCH NEWSPAPER

This article appeared in the Courier francais on August 23, 1 796, as the Haitian
revolution began. It was based on a letter sent by a French p lantation owner.

• • •

Since my first letter, which accompanies this, there has occu rred, and there is stil occurring, what fol ows:

At Port-au-
Prince, and in the environs, the Negroes are in a state of ins urrection;
they have burnt many habitations, which had remained unto uched til this day. The Negroes wil not work.

From Pennsylvania Gazette, Sept. 28, 1796.

On this side of Grand Rivière, there is a great rising; the Brig and Negroes have
kil ed a Negro chief named Gagnet, who commanded for the [French] Republic, his family, and the état-
major. Fifteen thousand men taken from the principal posts are
to go against the revolters; they doubt much the success of these new Republicans. I
deplore the unhappy fate of the inhabitants of St. Domingo. It is impossible for them
to come with security to their habitations. The Negroes who have returned to their

habitations wil not absolutely attend to speak to their mast
ers; they are wil ing
enough to be Republicans, but point de travail [no work]; th
ey think it is contrary to
Republican rights; by this title they are to be supplied with a
l that is necessary.

The mask is thrown off—
the Negroes say, haughtily, that St. Domingo belongs to
them; on this condition they wil work, otherwise not.

CHAPTER 22

NATIONALISM

Nationalism is one of the great forces of modern history, so much so that it is sometimes hard to step back and realize what a new kind of loyalty it is. Despite some hints of nationalist-type beliefs earlier, most people in 1750 identified themselves in terms of locality and, often, religion, not nation. From 1750 onward, however, first in Europe and then more globally, intellectual advocacy of nationalism, growing social changes—such as urbanization—that weakened traditional ties, and increasing interregional contacts also promoted nationalism.

Nationalism sprang in part from the revolutionary era of the late eighteenth century. The idea of citizen links with government helped nationalism in France, for example, where the world's first national anthem originated. Later, however, nationalism could be used as a conservative force, defending against social protests and often using adventures abroad to distract from tensions back home.

Rising nationalism played a role in many revolutions, from the American and French Revolutions onward. It supported major changes like the Latin American wars of independence and the Italian and the German unifications. It provided one of the major bases for opposition to European imperialism. It contributed to numerous wars.

Nationalism embodied a number of analytical tensions, beyo nd the liberal-
conservative divide. How would nationalists react to nations other than their own?

How would a nationalist balance national goals with other g oals such as liberal institutions or economic advance—
in other words, where would nationalism fit in a
priority list? How would a nationalist balance appeals to nati onal traditions, real or
imagined, with a desire to promote more modern developm ent?

The documents that fol ow offer insights into several aspect s of nationalism,
including its somewhat elusive basic definition. A proclamati on by the French
Revolution’s National Convention helps explain how the revo lution could promote
nationalism in adjacent conquered territories (like western G ermany or Spain) both
intentional y and unintentional y. A treatise by the German p hilosopher Fichte was
one of the first deliberate statements of nationalism and sho ws its intel ectual bases;
two quick fol owups in later German history (one from the Fr ench revolutionary
period, one from the national unifications period of the 1860 s) show how
nationalism could later be used. Final y, Simon Bolivar sugge sts the nature of Latin
American nationalism, as it was defined as part of the wars of independence.

Questions

1. How did the French Revolution stimulate nationalism both at home and in Europe
more general y? Did the revolutionaries see themselves as n ationalists or universalists?

2. How did the nationalism that emerged around the French Revolution relate to the
more explicit purposes of revolution discussed in the previou s chapter?

3. What was Fichte’s philosophical basis for nationalism? Wh at ideas was he arguing against in promoting nationalism?

4. How did Frederick Wil iam reflect the impact of revolution ary ideas in urging
opposition to Napoleonic France? How and why did he sugge st German

opposition to Napoleonic France? How and why did he sugge st German nationalism?

5. How did Bismarck define and use nationalism?

6. Did German nationalism remain consistent from Fichte thr ough Frederick Wil iam
to Bismarck, or were there significant changes?

7. Looking at the French and the German documents, discus s how nationalism could
be both a liberal and a conservative force. Was German nati onalism consistently conservative?

8. How does Bolivar’s nationalism compare to the European versions? What special

Latin American issues does he reflect? Where does his natio nalism fit on a liberal-conservative spectrum?

For Further Discussion

1. What factors explain the rise of nationalism in Europe and theAmericas?

2. How and why could nationalism turn against liberal ideals ?

3. Did leaders like Bolivar assume that Latin America was pa rt of Western
civilization, or did they assume that it was very different? W hat civilizational
framework works best for understanding Latin American hist ory in the nineteenth century?

4. Are the forces that sustained nationalism declining in the twenty-first century?

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND NATIONALISM: A 1792 DECR EE

The fol owing decree came from the National Convention in France, elected in 1792.

France had begun to fight off foreign attack and had annexe d Belgium in the
process; Belgian resistance stimulated the decree.

• • •

The National Convention, having heard the report of its com bined Committees of
Finance, War, and Diplomacy; faithful to the principles of the sovereignty of the

people, which do not permit it to recognize any institutions detrimental thereto, and
wishing to establish the rules to be fol owed by the generals of the armies of the
Republic in territories where they bear arms, decrees:
1. In territories which are or may be occupied by the armies of the Republic, the
generals shal proclaim immediately, in the name of the Fre nch nation, the
sovereignty of the people, the suppression of al established authorities and of
existing imposts or taxes, the [manorial] abolition of the tith e, of feudalism, of
seigniorial rights, ... ofnobility, and general y of al privileges .

2. They shal announce to the people that they bring it peac e, aid, fraternity,
liberty, and equality, and they shal convoke it thereafter in primary or communal
assemblies, in order to create and organize a provisional ad ministration and justice;
they shal supervise the security of persons and property; th ey shal have the present
decree and the proclamation annexed thereto printed in the language or idiom of
the territory and posted and executed without delay in ever y commune.

3. Al agents and civil or military officials of the former gover nment, as wel as
individuals heretofore considered noble, or members of any corporation heretofore
privileged, shal be, for this time only, inadmissible to vote i n the primary or

communal assemblies, and they may not be elected to positions in the provisional administration or judiciary.

4. The generals shall place, consecutively, under the safeguard and protection of the French Republic all real and personal property belonging to the public treasury, to the prince, his abettors, adherents, and voluntary satellites, to public establishments, and to lay and ecclesiastical bodies and communities; they shall have a detailed statement thereof drafted promptly and dispatched to the Executive council, and they shall take all measure within their power in order that such properties be respected.

5. The provisional administration, elected by the people, shall be responsible for the surveillance and administration of matters placed under the safeguard and protection of the French Republic; it shall supervise the security of persons and property; it shall have the laws now in force relative to the trial of civil and criminal suites, to the police, and to public security put into effect; it shall be in charge of regulating and paying local expenses and those necessary for the common defense; it may institute taxes, provided, however, that they are not borne by the indigent and hard-working portion of the population.

From John Hall Stewart, ed., A Documentary Survey of the French Revolution (New York: Macmillan, 1951), 381–84. Reprinted by permission of Pearson Education, Inc.

Upper Saddle River, NJ.

6. As soon as the provisional administration has been organi zed, the National
Convention shal appoint commissioners from within its own body to go to fraternize with it.

7. The Executive Council also shal appoint national commis sioners who shal go,
consecutively, to the places, to consult the generals and the provisional
administration elected by the people concerning measures t o be taken for the
common defence and concerning the means to be employe d to procure the clothing
and provisions necessary for the armies, and to pay ther [i.e ., the armies’] expenses during their sojourn on its territory.

Henceforth the French nation proclaims the sovereignty of t he people, the
suppression of al civil and military authorities which have g overned you up to the
present, and of al taxes which you sustain, in whatever for m they exist; the
abolition of the tithe, of feudalism, of seigniorial rights, … fix ed or contingent, of
banalités of real and personal servitude, of hunting and fishi ng privileges, [labor
service and al manorial taxes], and general y of every speci es of contributions with
which you have been burdened by your usurpers; it proclai ms also the abolition
among you of every corporation, noble, sacerdotal, and othe rs, of al prerogative
and privileges that are contrary to equality. You are hencefor th, brothers and

friends, al citizens, al equal in rights, and al equal y summ
oned to govern, to
serve, and to defend your Patrie [fatherland].

FICHTE

Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–
1814) was a German philosopher who supported the
French Revolution and its ideals but then rethought his positi
on as the French
extended controls over Germany. This address occurred in 1
806, in French-occupied Berlin.

• • •

The first, original, and truly natural boundaries of states are
beyond doubt their
internal boundaries. Those who speak the same language ar
e joined to each other by
a multitude of invisible bonds by nature herself, long before
any human art begins;

a multitude of invisible bonds by nature herself, long before
any human art begins;
they understand each other and have the power of continui
ng to make themselves
understood more and more clearly; they belong together an
d are by nature one and
an inseparable whole. Such a whole, if it wishes to absorb a
nd mingle with itself any
other people of different descent and language, cannot do s
o without itself becoming
confused, in the beginning at any rate, and violently disturbi
ng the even progress of
its culture. From this internal boundary, which is drawn by th
e spiritual nature of
man himself, the marking of the external boundary by dwel i
ng place results as a
consequence; and in the natural view of things it is not beca

use men dwel between
certain mountains and rivers that they are a people, but, on the contrary, men dwel together—
and, if their luck has so arranged it, are protected by rivers and mountain

—
because they were a people already by a law of nature whic h is much higher.

From Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Addresses to the German Natio n, ed. George A. Kel y
(New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1968), 19,091, 19,394, 19,79 8, in public domain.

Thus was the German nation place—
sufficiently united within itself by a common
language and a common way of thinking, and sharply enoug h severed from the other peoples—
in the middle of Europe, as a wal to divide races not akin....

That things should remain thus did not suit the selfishness o f foreign countries,
whose calculations did not look more than one moment ahe ad. They found German
bravery useful in waging their wars and German hands usef ul to snatch the booty
from their rivals. A means had to be found to attain this end, and foreign cunning
won an easy victory over German ingenuousness and lack of suspicion. lt was
foreign countries which first made use of the division of min d produced by religious disputes in Germany—
Germany, which presented on a smal scale the features of Christian Europe as a whole—
foreign countries, I say, made use of these disputes to

break up the close inner unity of Germany into separate and disconnected parts....

Now at last, let us be bold enough to look at the deceptive vision of a universal monarchy, which people are beginning to hold up for public veration in place of that equilibrium which for some time has been growing more and more preposterous, and let us perceive how hateful and contrary to reason that vision is....

Only when each people, left to itself, develops and forms itself in accordance with its own peculiar quality, and only when in every people each individual develops himself in accordance with that common quality, as well as in accordance with his own peculiar quality— then, and then only, does the manifestation of divinity appear in its true mirror as it ought to be. ... Only in the invisible qualities of nations, which are hidden from their own eyes— qualities as the means whereby these nations remain in touch with the source of original life— only therein is to be found the guarantee of their presence and future worth, virtue, and merit.

A PROCLAMATION BY THE PRUSSIAN KING, 1813

Frederick William was king of Prussia. He issued this proclamation as he prepared to join the war against Napoleon. The Prussian monarchy had a long history of careful military activity and promotion of its dynasty. The proclamation reflects the

monarch’s interest but in new ways that showed the influen ce of revolutionary ideals, including nationalism.

• • •

THE KING OF PRUSSIA ROUSES HIS PEOPLE AGAINST NAPOL EON

There is no need of explaining to my loyal subjects, or to an y German, the reasons

There is no need of explaining to my loyal subjects, or to an y German, the reasons
for the war which is about to begin. They lie plainly before t he eyes of awakened
Europe. We succumbed to the superior force of France. The peace which fol owed
deprived me of my people and, far from bringing us blessing s, it inflicted upon us
deeper wounds than the war itself, sucking out the very mar row of the country. Our
principal fortresses remained in the hand of the enemy, and agriculture, as wel as
the highly developed industries of our towns, was crippled. T he freedom of trade
was hampered and thereby the sources of commerce and pr osperity cut off. The
country was left a prey to the ravages of destitution.

I hoped, by the punctilious fulfil ment of the engagements I had entered into, to
lighten the burdens of my people, and even to convince the French emporer that it
would be to his own advantage to leave Prussia her indepen dence. But the purest
and best of intentions on my part were of no avail against in

solence and
faithlessness, and it became only too plain that the emperor ’s treaties would
gradual y ruin us even more surely than his wars. The mome nt is come when we can
no longer harbor the slightest il usion as to our situation.

Brandenburgers, Prussians, Silesians, Pomeranians, Lithuani ans! You know what
you have borne for the past seven years; you know the sad f ate that awaits you if we
do not bring this war to a honorable end. Think of the times gone by,—of the Great
Elector, the great Frederick! Remember the blessings for whi ch your forefathers
fought under their leadership and which they paid for with t heir blood,—freedom of
conscience, national honor, independence, commerce, indus try, learning. Look at the
great example of our powerful al ies, the Russians; look at th e Spaniards, the
Portuguese. For such objects as these even weaker peoples have gone forth against
the mightier enemies and returned in triumph. Witness the heroic Swiss and the people of the Netherlands.

Great sacrifices wil be demanded from every class of the pe ople, for our
undertaking is a great one, and the number and resources o f our enemies far from
insignificant. But would you not rather make these sacrifices for the fatherland and
for your own rightful king than for a foreign ruler, who, as he has shown by many
examples, wil use you and your sons and your uttermost far thing for ends which are nothing to you?

Faith in God, perseverance, and the powerful aid of our al ie s wil bring us victory
as the reward of our honest efforts. Whatever sacrifices may be required of us as
individuals, they wil be outweighed by the sacred rights for which we make them,
and for which we must fight to a victorious end unless we ar e wil ing to cease to be
Prussians or Germans. This is the final, the decisive struggle ; upon it depends on our
independence, our prosperity, our existence. There are no ot her alternatives but an
honorable peace or a heroic end. You would wil ingly face ev en the latter for
honor’s sake, for without honor no Prussian or German could live.

From James Harvey Robinson, ed., Readings in European His tory, vol. 2 (New York: Ginn, 1928), 522–23.

However, we may confidently await the outcome. God and o ur own firm purpose
wil bring victory to our cause and with it an assured and glo rious peace and the return of happier times.

Frederick Wil iam.

Breslau, March 17, 1813.

BISMARCK

Otto von Bismarck was the chief architect of German unification (1866–1871) from a welter of individual kingdoms, the largest of which was Prussia. Bismarck used nationalism, and German unification both built on and encouraged national loyalties; but his own motiviations had more to do with enhancing Prussian power.

This brief comment suggests the complexities of his approach.

• • •

In order that German patriotism should be active and effective, it needs as a rule to hang on the peg of dependence upon a dynasty; independent of dynasty it rarely comes to the rising point, though in theory it daily does so, in parliament, in the press, in public meeting; in practice the German needs either attachment to a dynasty or the goad of anger, hurrying him into action; the latter phenomenon, however, by its own nature is not permanent. It is as a Prussian, a Hanoverian, a Wurtemberger, a Bavarian or Hessian, rather than a German, that he is disposed to give unequivocal proof of a patriotism; and in the lower orders and the parliamentary groups it wil be long before it is otherwise. We cannot say that the Hanoverian, Hessian, and other dynasties were at any speci

al pains to win the
affections of their subjects; but nevertheless the German pa
triotism of their subjects
is essential y conditioned by their attachment to the dynast
y after which they cal
themselves. … The German’s love of Fatherland has need of
 a prince on whom it can
concentrate its attachment. Suppose that al the German dy
nasties were suddenly
deposed; there would then be no likelihood that the German
 national sentiment
would suffice to hold al Germans together from the point of
view of international
law amid the friction of European politics, even in the form o
f federated Hanse
towns and imperial vil age communes. The Germans would f
al a prey to more
closely welded nations if they once lost the tie which resides
 in the princes’ sense of
community of rank. History shows for Germany the Prussian
stock is that of which
the individual character is most strongly stamped.

From Otto von Bismarck, Memoirs (in Bismarck, The Man an
d the Statesman, New York; Harper and Brothers, 1899).

POLITICAL IDEALS AND NATIONALISM IN LATIN AMERICA: SIM ÓN BOLÍVAR

Simon Bolivar (1783–
1830) was one of the principle leaders in Latin America’s
successful struggle for independence early in the nineteenth
 century. A Creole—that
is, American born but of European stock, Bolivar was keenly
aware of the political
ideas of the European Enlightenment and the French and A

merican Revolutions. He
led the battles against the Spaniards in Venezuela, Columbia
, and the northern
Andes region, hoping to form one great state. He was select
ed as the initial leader
but was unable to maintain the political structure or the unit
y he had intended, as
the region soon split into separate, smal er countries. The fo
l owing selections come
from a proclamation cal ing Venezuelans to arms in the fight
 against Spanish
occupation, which occurred in 1813, and an address to the l
egislature in Venezuela soon after independence, in 1819.

• • •

THE 1813 PROCLAMATION

Venezuelans: An army of your brothers, sent by the Sovereig
n Congress of New Granada [present-
day Columbia] has come to liberate you. Having expel ed th
e
oppressors from the provinces of Mérida and Trujil o, it is no
w among you.

We are sent to destroy the Spaniards, to protect the America
ns, and to reestablish
the republican governments that once formed the Confeder
ation of Venezuela. The
states defended by our arms are again governed by their for
mer constitutions and
tribunals, in ful enjoyment of their liberty and independenc
e, for our mission is
designed only to break the chains of servitude which stil sh
ackle some of our towns,

and not to impose laws or exercise acts of dominion to whic
h the rules of war might entitle us.

Moved by your misfortunes, we have been unable to observ
e with indifference the
afflictions you were forced to experience by the barbarous S
paniards, who have
ravished you, plundered you, and brought you death and de
struction. They have
violated the sacred rights of nations. They have broken the
most solemn agreements
and treaties. In fact, they have committed every manner of
crime, reducing the
Republic of Venezuela to the most frightful desolation. Justic
e therefore demands
vengeance, and necessity compels us to exact it. Let the mo
nsters who infest
Columbian soil, who have drenched it in blood, be cast out f
orever; may their
punishment be equal to the enormity of their perfidy, so tha
t we may eradicate the
stain of our ignominy and demonstrate to the nations of the
world that the sons of
America cannot be offended with impunity.

From Vicente Lecuna, ed., Selected Writings of Bolivar (New
York: Colonial Press, 1951), 31–32.

Despite our just resentment toward the iniquitous Spaniards
, our magnanimous
heart stil commands us to open to them for the last time a
path to reconciliation
and friendship; they are invited to live peaceful y among us,
 if they wil abjure their
crimes, honestly change their ways, and cooperate with us i
n destroying the

intruding Spanish government and in the reestablishment of the Republic of Venezuela.

Any Spaniard who does not, by every active and effective means, work against tyranny in behalf of this just cause, will be considered an enemy and punished; as a traitor to the nation, he will inevitably be shot by a firing squad. On the other hand, a general and absolute amnesty is granted to those who come over to our army with or without their arms, as well as those who render aid to the good citizens who are endeavoring to throw off the yoke of tyranny. Army officers and civil magistrates who proclaim the government of Venezuela and join with us shall retain their positions; in a word, those Spaniards who render outstanding service to the State shall be regarded and treated as Americans.

And you Americans who, by error or treachery, have been lured from the paths of justice, are informed that your brothers, deeply regretting the error of your ways, have pardoned you as we are profoundly convinced that you cannot be truly to blame, for only the blindness and ignorance in which you have been kept up to now by those responsible for your crimes could have induced you to commit them. …

You are hereby assured, with absolute impunity, of your honor, lives, and property.

The single title, “Americans,” shal be your safeguard and gu
arantee. Our arms have
come to protect you, and they shal never be raised against
a single one of you, your brothers.

THE 1819 PROCLAMATION

We are not Europeans; we are not Indians; we are but a mix
ed species of aborigines
and Spaniards. Americans by birth and Europeans by law, w
e find ourselves engaged
in a dual conflict: we are disputing with the natives for titles
of ownership, and at

in a dual conflict: we are disputing with the natives for titles
of ownership, and at
the same time we are struggling to maintain ourselves in th
e country that gave us
birth against the opposition of the invaders. Thus our positio
n is most extraordinary
and complicated. But there is more. As our role has always b
een strictly passive and
political existence nil, we find that our quest for liberty is no
w even more difficult
of accomplishment; for we, having been placed in a state lo
wer than slavery, had
been robbed not only of our freedom but also of the right to
exercise an active
domestic tyranny. … We have been ruled more by deceit tha
n by force, and we have
been degraded more by vice than by superstition. Slavery is
 the daughter of
darkness: an ignorant people is a blind instrument of its own
 destruction. Ambition
and intrigue abuse the credulity and experience of men lack
ing al political,

economic, and civic knowledge; they adopt pure il usion as r eality; they take license
for liberty, treachery for patriotism, and vengeance for justic e. If a people perverted
by their training, succeed in achieving their liberty, they wil soon lose it, for it
would be of no avail to endeavor to explain to them that hap piness consists in the
practice of virtue; that the rule of law is more powerful than the rule of tyrants,
because as the laws are more inflexible, everyone should su bmit to their beneficent
austerity; that proper morals, and not force, are the bases of law; and that to practice justice is to practice liberty.

From: Simón Bolívar, An Address of Bolivar at the Congress o f Angostura, February
15, 1819. (Reprint ed., Washington, D.C.: Press of B.S. Adam s, 1919), passim.

Although those people [North Americans], so lacking in man y respects, are
unique in the history of mankind, it is a marvel, I repeat, tha t so weak and
complicated a government as the federal system has manag ed to govern them in the
difficult and trying circumstances of their past. But, regardle ss of the effectiveness of
this form of government with respect to North America, I mu st say that it has never
for a moment entered my mind to compare the position and character of two states as dissimilar as the English-
American and the Spanish-American. Would it not be
most difficult to apply to Spain the English system of politica l, civil, and religious

liberty: Hence, it would be even more difficult to adapt to Ve nezuela the laws of North America.

CHAPTER 23

THE OPIUM WAR

Chinese and English Views

One of the key events in nineteenth-century history was the West's forcing open of China. Like the Crusades many centuries before (see chapte r 10), when Europe attacked Islam, the confrontation of the West and China al o ws a comparison of two societies' reactions to a single event. Unlike the Crusades, h owever, this event involved a decisive Western victory and a lasting impact on China because that society was on the losing end. The whole episode was a cruc ial stage in expanding Western imperialism. Comparison facilitates understanding i mperialism from two sides rather than accepting a winner's narrative alone, while also suggesting some reasons for later Chinese policies devoted to eliminating out side control.

Since the rise of the West in the world trade in the fifteenth century, China had adopted a cautious policy, trading actively but with careful s upervision of contacts.

The nation had no need for Western goods, and it distrusted these aggressive barbarians. British requests for access to Chinese markets w

ere rudely declined as
late as 1796: China could stand alone.

Two developments altered this situation by the 1830s. In the first place, China's
government was weakening, its hold over its bureaucracy and its tax revenues both
slipping. The desire to maintain a traditional policy of isolation and rebuff
remained, but the ability to implement it had declined.

More important was the greater strength of Britain and the West, thanks to early
industrialization. The West had more wealth, which created a greater appetite for
Chinese luxury goods such as silk and porcelain. It engaged in more production,
which aroused some interest in gaining access to Chinese markets. It had better
technology and better and more abundant armaments, which meant it could now
give the Chinese a run for their money if it came to battle.

It was still true that the West had little to offer China economically, for the great
empire had its own preindustrial manufacturing and elaborate internal trade. That is
why the final ingredient to this unhappy puzzle involved pressure to sell opium. All
these elements drew together in the first (of two) opium wars in the late 1830s. With
a small military force, the British compelled the Chinese to back down; China began
to be open to foreign trade, though a second war was needed to confirm these
results. The Opium War, in turn, was not only pivotal in Chin

ese history, ushering in
many decades of disarray and Western intervention. It also s ignaled the beginning of the massive nineteenth-
century explosion of European imperialism virtual y worldwide.

Between 1839 and 1842, British forces, supplemented by ot her Western troops,
successful y battled Chinese coastal contingents over the rig ht to import opium and
more general y to trade freely in China. The war demonstrat ed that the West could
easily capture coastal cities. Chinese opposition to Western demands was based on its long-
standing suspicion of foreigners (“barbarians”) and foreign t rade, plus a
keen awareness of the effects of opium, which had not been widely used before the
late eighteenth century. The imperial government attempte d to assert its normal
strong control over internal affairs. Britain was battling for a ccess to lucrative
Chinese products and markets, the old commercial goal that Western military

Chinese products and markets, the old commercial goal that Western military
superiority could not attain. Opium, produced in British holdi ngs in India, was a
desirable means of earning Chinese currency to exchange fo r eagerly sought silks and craft goods—
for the Chinese were not wildly enthusiastic about what the West
itself had for sale. The war began a process of growing West ern interference and

internal confusion as China was reluctantly dragged into ne w international involvements.

Views of the war varied. The first selections reflect the offici al policy, backed by centuries of imperial confidence and responsibility. But repor ts from officials on the spot show the nation’s weakness in fact, which made the e mperor’s goals unrealizable. An English participant, J. El iot Bingham, gives an English explanation, offering a much different view of the opium issue, the qualit y of Chinese society, and the benefits of Western power. It is a classic imperialist statement. How does it compare to the views about non-Westerners prevalent in the slave trade and the conquest of the Americas (chapters 16 and 17)? Final y, a re forming official, Wei Yuan, offers a plan in 1842 for reviving China and defeating the West. His views long remained unheeded.

Questions

1. What was official Chinese policy? How did it reflect traditi
onal Confucian ideas
about the role and legitimacy of government? How did the e
mperor evaluate the
Europeans (cal ed barbarians by the Chinese)?

2. What kind of concessions did the imperial commissioner u
rge in 1842? What were his motives?

3. How did a British official justify the use of force and the sa
le of opium to the
Chinese? How did his view of the Chinese compare with the
Chinese view of the Europeans?

4. On what bases did the British now find the Chinese inferio
r? What, according to
Bingham, might ultimately bring the Chinese up to civilized l
evels? What evidence
does Bingham offer about why the British were now able to
defeat the Chinese?

5. Is Bingham a characteristic European imperialist, in his m
otives and his
arguments? Using his statements, how would you define the
imperialist approach?

6. What were the key ingredients of Wei Yuan’s Defense Plan
? What elements of
traditional Chinese policy does he propose to change? Woul
d his reforms have
gone far enough to make China capable of resisting further
European
intervention? How would Bingham react to Wei Yuan’s plan?

For Further Discussion

1. What impact did the Opium War have on long-term Chinese attitudes toward the West? Would China (and the eventual Chinese-Western relations) have been better served if the West had simply taken the nation over as a colony, as was done with India, rather than exploiting it economical y without taking ful responsibility?

2. Was Wei Yuan proposing a “modernization” of China? Why did China not at least quickly move to accept this kind of strategy? Why was China slow to reform, at a time when the West and other neighboring societies were clearly changing so rapidly?

3. Did many Westerners real y believe their own rationales for imperialism, or was this simply a naked power grab?

4. How would a British history and a Chinese history, using these documents around

4. How would a British history and a Chinese history, using these documents around 1900, when imperialist assumptions stil reigned in Europe, differ in their accounts of the Opium War?

CHINA: OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

The fol owing two documents, both issued in 1842 after the war had begun, come respectively from the emperor himself, outlining an official policy of resistance, and

from a regional commissioner reporting on the actual course of the fighting.

• • •

IMPERIAL EDICT TO THE GRAND SECRETARIAT, JUNE 5, 1842

On account of the widespread evil of opium in depraving the lives of our people, I
issued edicts in a preceding year commanding the various p rovinces strictly to
prohibit the drug. The warning was repeated many times th ereafter. And since
Canton is the port where the outer barbarians come to trade , Lin Tsê-hsü was
special y delegated to go there to examine the affairs. The b arbarian merchants of
al nations obeyed the restrictions imposed by the Commissi oner. The English
barbarian rebel El iot alone started disturbances on the pret ext that our government had destroyed their opium....

From P. C. Kuo, A Critical Study of the First Anglo-Chinese War (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1935), 289–92, 293, 296, 298. Reproduced by permission of the Commercial Press (Hong Kong) Limited.

Yet the rebel ious barbarians were cunning and fickle. Their demands knew no
bounds. They evidently knew that Yishan was bent upon pea ceful diplomacy and
that he was not backed by force. Hence they dared to start hostilities by suddenly
attacking the forts at Taikok and Shakok, kil ing our officials and disturbing the
inhabitants. It is thus apparent that the rebel ious barbarian

s began hostilities on
account of smuggling opium. Then, they pretended to reque st favors, while in the
meantime they enfolded their dark schemes. Such sheer insi ncerity and ingratitude
should arouse the wrath of both the gods and men. When I c al ed forth our punitive
expedition, it was prompted by this consideration.

Later, when Yishan and his col eagues arrived at Canton, the rebel ious barbarians
had invaded the inner river and were besieging the provinci al city itself. The
provincial authorities thereupon agreed that the rebels soug ht only material profit
and wished the restoration of trade. They prayed that the [merchant] debts be paid
back to them. As I always treated things with true generosit y, I thought that this
negligible sum hardly deserved much consideration and that it was certainly not
worth while to find an enemy in these rotten people, if by th e grant the barbarians
would abstain from creating further troubles. Thus again, I made an unusual
concession out of a love for the lives of our people.

But, contrary to my expectations, the barbarians cherished mischievous ideas,
offending heaven and ignoring reason itself. For no sooner h ad they composed the
quarrels at Canton than fresh troubles arose in Fukien and C hekiang. They invaded
Tinghai for the second time and took other cities in successi on. It led to the suicide
of our Governor and the martyrdom of our generals. The guil

t of their depredation
upon the lives of our people was beyond the power of rede
mption.

Therefore, we dispatched Yikin and others to extirpate them
with our troops.

During the past few months, the enemy withdrew from Ning
po, but captured Chapu
in its stead. Thus these rebels first begged our favors while i
n Canton and fled. Then,

in its stead. Thus these rebels first begged our favors while i
n Canton and fled. Then,
in Chekiang, they fil ed their stores by robbery or depredatio
n. Judged by their
rapacious conduct, their guilt has real y amounted to the ful
measure. While it wil
certainly receive the punishment from the heaven, yet there
is no reason why the people should suffer this wise.

When I deliberate upon this situation, I feel tormented by it.
So long as the evil
were not eradicated, there is no salvation for the sufferings
of the people. I censure
myself for the inadequacy of my virtue, and can scarcely res
t in peace. The generals,
secretaries, governors, and al other officials should underst
and my mind and strive
to relieve the sufferings of the people. They should not procr
astinate, lest they
should spoil the situation at present. Nor should they hope t
o evade their duties, lest
they should perpetuate il repute in the future.

As to the officers and soldiers in the army, there is a current belief among them
that the sturdy ships and fierce cannons of the barbarians ar e irresistible. Hence,
they gave up fighting the moment they saw the enemies on the battlefields. But they
should know that the cause of the invasion of the enemies w as our concession at the
beginning. Should every one go forth bravely and with the c oöperation of the vil age
braves, it must be obvious that not only there is great differ ence between us the
hosts and them the strangers, but also there is no comparis on between the numerical
strength of the two parties. Fighting with the advantage of k nowing our own
geography, there is no difficulty for us to achieve success. T hus it is apparent that
the violence of the rebel ious barbarians is al attributable to the inefficiency of our own troops....

I am the ruler of al the people. If I should be content with p eace for the time
being, and not seek for the great and the far, and let the evi l of the opium go its way
without any prohibition, that would mean that I am betrayin g my ancestors who
intrusted to me the care of the empire, and that I am unable to afford due protection
to the lives of my subjects. Thinking about these points, how can I rest without
strictly prohibiting it, how dare I not strictly prohibit it?

Although the barbarians are becoming daily more violent an d rapacious, you
commanders and governors, occupying important posts of t

he government, should
arouse your conscience and enforce the laws of prohibition with vigor. Those who
exert their energy wil certainly receive rewards. Those who procrastinate wil
likewise receive penalties. When things are conducted this w ise, I see no reason what
attack launched by us cannot achieve success, nor what def ense made by us is not impregnable....

In a word, the prohibition of opium has its object in the savin g of the lives of the
people, while the defense against the invaders has its object in the protection of the
same. I am obsessed by these tasks al the time. You minist ers of the state must alike
give united support to the cause, encouraging the troops to fight with persistence.

Certainly it wil result in the extermination of the rebels, and the eradication of
violence along the coast. By that time, al of us can share wi th the people a universal peace.

REPORTS BY KIYING, IMPERIAL COMMISSIONER, 1842

As I examined into the said principles, I found that they truly indicate, as your
Majesty had said, their [Western] insistence upon material p rofit. I believed that it
was a good occasion for us to get them under our control....

... Should we stil persist in resistance and should the city fal to the barbarians,
the loss of our own lives is an insignificant matter. But we fe ar that once this city,

the loss of our own lives is an insignificant matter. But we fe
ar that once this city,
the metropolis of three provinces, should be upset, not only
would the route of
Chinkiang be cut off, but the barbarians could easily sail dire
ct to the capitals of
Anhwei, Kiangsi, and Hupeh. Moreover, according to a report
 of the magistrate of Yangchow, Pang I-
chu, the barbarians had declared that if they fight and lose,
they
wil employ native traitors to instigate troubles from within.
Should this be true, the
disaster would be stil more inconceivable.

We believe that, although the demands of the barbarians ar
e indeed rapacious, yet
they are little more than a desire for ports and for the privile
ge of trade. There are
no dark schemes in them. Compared with war which wil ine
vitably entail great
disasters, we would rather see assent be given to their dem
ands, and thus save the
whole country south of the Yangtze....

In settling the barbarian affairs this time, we are governed a
t every hand by the
inevitable and we concede that the policy is the least comm
endable. What we have
been doing is to choose between danger and safety, not bet
ween right and wrong.

For instance, the barbarians asked for as many as 21,000,00
0 dol ars, and five ports.

Although we are ignorant, yet we realize that the public reve
nues of our government

are limited, that the coastal frontiers are important, and that we should not give concessions easily. But the spirit of the invaders is running high. They occupy our important cities. The il ness on the limbs is becoming one in the heart of a person.

Should we fail to take advantage of the present occasion, and to ease the situation by soothing the barbarians, they wil run over our country like beasts, doing anything they like.

Moreover, during the past two years, we assembled the troops of several provinces. No matter whether it was for extirpation or for defense, it was of no avail. At present, the additional warships of the barbarians have almost doubled the number they used to have before. If it should happen that Nanking fal s, they can easily ascend the river. The waters are deep and the banks extended; while the spots of defense are scattered, the man power available at each point must necessarily be feeble. It would be hard to erect forts at one stroke. Judged by these circumstances, the possibilities of victory or defeat must be manifest. Should their force cut off our communication between the south and the north, it is stil more difficult to foretel the disasters.

The ships of the barbarians are sturdy and their cannons fierce. Previously this was only hearsay. But now we have been on their ships and personal y have seen their cannons. After this experience, we are the more convin

ced that we cannot
control them by force. It is because of the inevitable that we asked, in our previous
memorial, to grant large sums of money in order to save the country.

BRITAIN: A VIEW FROM A PARTICIPANT

J. El iot Bingham was a navy officer and the son of a clergym an (the latter fact is
particularly interesting in view of some of his moralizing stat ements and moral
blind spots). Bingham wrote his account right after the war, seeking to glorify the
British cause to an adoring public back home—
though popular enthusiasm for
imperialism was not yet at the pitch it would attain a few de cades later.

• • •

Now it might be supposed from the foregoing extracts, that t he Chinese have been very il -
used, and that the opium trade has been forced on them; bu t such was not at
al the case. I must beg my readers to divest themselves of such an idea; for be it

al the case. I must beg my readers to divest themselves of such an idea; for be it
remembered, while the Chinese statesmen pencil their highl y moral edicts and
memorials with one hand against the admission of this poiso nous drug, with the
other they receive bribes and fees, levied for the secret adm ission of this baneful

enchantment. Nay, they themselves, in secret, revel in al th e luxury of the opium
pipe; a luxury which, when once indulged in, it is almost imp ossible to shake off....

To suppress this traffic is utterly impossible, until the whole character of the
Chinese nation becomes altered. Opium they wil have; and experience has proved
that al the obstacles and difficulties thrown in the way of its introduction have only
tended to increase it, and extend its use. It would be just as easy to put down beer
and gin drinking in England. I much question whether there are not as many English
gin sufferers as there are Chinese opium sufferers, for the o pium is used by them in
the least deleterious manner, viz., by smoking.

But, as I have before observed, it is not the question of healt h or morality with
the Chinese. The fact is, our imports have given a great bala nce in our favour, as is shown in the fol owing table:—

Our purchases for the year ending June 30, 1838, for teas, si lk, and

£.

al other articles, amount to . . . . . .

3,147,481

Our sales of opium, metals, and cot on, to . . . . . .

5,637,052

Balance in favour of British . . . . . .

2,489,571

which was general y paid in sycee, the export of which, in 1837–8, amounted to nearly nine mil ions of dol ars.

Thus we see what was the chief and true reason for attempting to stop the trade in opium, and accordingly the edicts previously or subsequently to this year, enlarged more on the abstraction of the sycee than on the morals of the people.…

Active hostilities therefore ceased, and the Emperor’s assent to the provisions of the treaty having been intimated by an imperial edict on the 29th, vessels were despatched to the different Chinese ports to remove the embargoes on their trade.

During the preliminary arrangements of peace the Chinese authorities visited the Cornwal is, where they were received in great state and shown round the ship. The formidable appointments of the barbarian sanpan somewhat astonished the mind of their excel encies, while bumpers of cherry brandy upset the equilibrium of several jol y members of their suite. The entertainment was duly returned, when shamsoo took the place of cherry brandy.…

From John El iot Bingham, Narrative of the Expedition to China from the Commencement of the War to Its Termination in 1842. … (London: Henry Colburn, 1843), 22–23, 34–39, 363–66, 369–72.

Conclusion

The dispute with “the celestial empire” having been brought , by the energetic
measures of our present Government, to a triumphant concl usion, and that, not so
much by the mere destruction of junks and forts as by the c onsequent pressure on
the trade of the country, nothing more remains for me to do, than to offer a few
general remarks in concluding this narrative of events.

The military tactics of the Chinese must be regarded as far b elow mediocrity; and
can it be otherwise with a people, among whom the recomm endation of a general
for employment is not his intimate acquaintance with the ar ts of war, but rather his

for employment is not his intimate acquaintance with the ar ts of war, but rather his
acuteness to frame and his effrontery to utter the most unbl ushing falsehoods, in
order to deceive his opponents? No deceit is too gross, no ar tifice too mean and
dirty for a mandarin, whether soldier, magistrate, or states man, to stoop to. The
fol owing Chinese maxim il ustrates the justness of this stric ture:—“When the
territory of our sovereign is in difficulty we ought immediatel y to deliver it. What
would be the use of adhering bigotedly to a little bit of good faith, thereby involving doubts and delays?”

That individuals possessing personal courage are to be found, both among Chinese and Tartars, many a single combat has shown. The latter, indeed, both at Chapoo and Tchang-kiang, when all retreat was cut off, fought with a determination that was not expected. However, upon giving the subject our consideration, we shall find that this originated not so much from the esprit de corps of soldiers, as from the desperation of men fighting for their wives and children, whom they fully expected would be treated by their conquerors with the same inhuman barbarity as they would have inflicted upon us, had we lost the day. … And most assuredly they would have made us pay; for hundreds of English would have been chopped up at Pekin to evince the triumph of the empire over the rebel barbarians.

“The Chinese,” says the late Doctor Morrison, who had ample opportunity of forming a correct opinion, “are specious, but insincere, jealous, envious, and distrustful to a high degree; they are generally selfish, coldblooded, and inhuman.”

Can we, I would add, accord to them a single virtue? We might allow them one, filial affection, if that virtue, great and redeeming as it would otherwise be, did not arise more from the force of education and habit, than from the outpouring of a generous and humane heart.

The losses of the enemy, to say nothing of the wounded (va st numbers of whom probably died), cannot have fal en much short of twenty tho usand, exclusive of such as perished by disease. This must of course be regarded as a rough calculation, their habit of carrying off their kil ed and wounded whenever by a ny exertion they could do so, rendering it impossible in any one instance to discove r the exact number of the slain. Much as we may lament the necessity of inflicting so severe a chastisement on a people whose rulers alone were in fault, these losses ar e but a mere drop in comparison of the resources of an empire which maintains a t least one mil ion of men for military service, whom it draws from one-third of the human race. ... It may also behoove us to maintain for some time a commandi ng force in the China seas, not forgetting the perfidious character of a nation who , having despised us before as barbarians, now hate us as their conquerors. It wil be long ere their pride wil forgive us for the humiliating discipline we have applied to them.

It wil be our wisdom, however, to maintain the vantage gro und which, through the blessing of the Almighty upon our arms, we have acquir ed, as wel as to embrace every opportunity of making them understand the real char acter of the great nation they have to deal with; and in order to do this, we must trea t them with firmness combined with liberality. Let us hope that the way may thus

be opened for
enlightening their minds with the truths of that Christianity which is the real basis of Britain’s glory.

Much opposed as the government of China has ever been to the Christian religion,
I do not despair of the arrival of that day, when under the influence of the spirit of
the Most High the disciples of Christ shal abound and be protected even in the cities
of “the central flowery land.” Why should not Japan too, ere long, under the results
of similar operations, be induced to open her ports to the Christian trader, and

of similar operations, be induced to open her ports to the Christian trader, and
respect that cross of Christ on which she now tramples?…

WEI YUAN’S DEFENSE PLAN, 1842

Wei Yuan was a government official, trained in Confucianism, writing in the wake of
China’s defeat in the first Opium War. He proposed to the emperor a number of
changes, both in diplomacy and in military policy. His ideas were far too
imaginative for a conservative, weak government to accept. Nevertheless, some of
his proposals contain some interesting mistakes, particularly in Russian and Indian
geography; why was an otherwise alert official in China prone to mistakes of this sort?

• • •

India is on the southwest of the Onion Range, and adjacent t
o our further Tibet, the
Gurkhas, and Burma. From the homeland of the British barb
arians, India is several
myriad li. The British barbarians used warships and occupie
d the three parts of
India, in the east, the south, and center. The Russian troops
then, from the space
between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, attacked and s
ubdued the various
nomadic tribes and made connection with the two western a
nd central parts of
India. They were only separated by the Himalayas. Each sid
e was guarded by heavy
garrisons of troops. From Bengal to Malwa in East India and f
rom Bombay to
Madras in South India opium is prevalent. The British barbari
ans annual y col ect
from opium taxes more than ten mil ion (taels) silver, and th
e Russians are jealous.

When the British barbarians mobilized Indian … troops and
warships to invade
China, they were greatly afraid that Russia might take advan
tage of their weakness
to invade Hindustan…. Therefore, the British barbarians’ fea
r of Russia lies not in
her national capital but in India. This is one opportunity whic
h might be used….

From Ssu-
yü Têng and John K. Fairbank, eds., China’s Response to the
West: A Documentary Survey, 1839–
1923 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press,
1954), 32–
34. Copyright © 1954, 1979 by the President and Fel ows of

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yü Têng and John King Fairbank. Reprinted
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There is no better method of attacking England by sea than to use France and
America. France is very close to the English barbarians, bein g separated only by an
arm of the sea. America and the English barbarians, on the other hand, are separated
by a great ocean. Beginning from the period at the end of th e Ming and the
beginning of this dynasty, France colonized the northeast te rritory of America. Cities
and towns were built, markets and ports were opened. The British barbarians
suddenly attacked and seized them. Thereupon the French b arbarians and the
English barbarians became bitter enemies....

Let us establish a shipyard and an arsenal at two spots, Chu enpi and Taikoktow
outside of the Bogue in Kwangtung, and select one or two p ersons from among the
foreign headmen who have come from France and America, respectively, to bring
Western craftsmen to Canton to take charge of building ship s and making arms. In
addition, we should invite Western helmsmen to take charge of teaching the
methods of navigating ships and of using cannon, fol owing the precedent of the
barbarian officials in the Imperial Board of Astronomy. We sh ould select clever
artisans and good soldiers from Fukien and Kwangtung to le arn from them, the

craftsmen to learn the casting of cannon and building of ships, and the good soldiers to learn their methods of navigating and attack. … In Kwangtung there should be ten thousand soldiers; in Fukien, ten thousand; in Chekiang, six thousand; and in

ten thousand soldiers; in Fukien, ten thousand; in Chekiang, six thousand; and in Kiangsu, four thousand. In assigning soldiers to the ships we must rely on selection and training.… Eight out of ten should be taken from among the fishermen and smugglers along the sea coast. Two out of ten should be taken from the old encampments of the water forces. All the padded rations and extra rations of the water force should be… used for the recruiting and maintenance of good soldiers.

We must make the water forces of China able to navigate large (lit., “storied”) ships overseas, and able to fight against foreign barbarians on the high seas.

CHAPTER 24

THE EMANCIPATIONS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

Widespread abolition of slavery and serfdom in the nineteenth century was one of the big developments in world history. Documents in this section encourage discussion of the reasons for this change; the actual nature of the change; and the

gaps between reform professions and actual results—
al in a comparative context.

Latin American countries abolished slavery between 1810 a
nd 1890, and the
institution was also attacked in Africa. Serfdom ended in Eur
ope. Forms of work and
power that had existed virtual y since the origin of civilizatio
n were opposed and put down.

Historians continue to debate the origins of the unprecedent
ed movement to
abolish the most blatant forms of coercive labor. New democ
ratic and humanitarian
ideals played a role. Christian humanitarians began agitatin
g against the Atlantic
slave trade in the late eighteenth century. Enlightenment po
litical theorists joined in.

Russian reformers picked up these sentiments as wel , urgin
g fundamental reform in
Russia; American abolitionists stepped up the attack on slav
ery in the United States
by the 1820s (after many northern states had ended the ins
titution in the wake of
the American Revolution). But new ideas, sincerely held, wer
e not the only
motivation. Some historians also point to the importance of
new forms of capitalist
labor, which demonstrated that workers could be exploited
as “free” wage labor and
that slavery might in fact not be efficient enough for the co
mmercial needs of the
nineteenth century. Antislavery campaigns might also distra
ct industrial workers
from their own plight, by pointing to miseries elsewhere. Risi

ng global population
levels provided alternative sources of labor.

Discussions of the complex causes of the emancipation curr ent relate also to the
question of results. On paper, emancipation ended legal ser vitude. But even the
humanitarians had not necessarily thought much about the real conditions that
would prevail for former serfs and slaves. And powerful inter ested parties, such as
the estate owners, had obvious reasons to try to limit the im pact of change.

Emancipation, though real, in this sense set up further probl ems.

Russia, the United States, and Brazil in the nineteenth centu ry invite comparison.

Al three were huge, expanding countries beginning to have a growing impact in
world affairs. Al three abolished deeply rooted labor system s between 1800 and
1890, but al three faced important social tensions thereafte r.

Two major moves occurred almost simultaneously: Russia’s Emancipation of the
Serfs in 1861 and Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation of 18 63. Circumstances
differed. Lincoln acted during civil war, to ral y support for th e Union cause. Russia
hoped to reduce peasant discontent and also build a more fl exible economy and
labor force, as it lagged behind industrial Western Europe. R

ussia was spurred by its
embarrassing loss to Britain and France in the Crimean War (1854–55), which
seemed to prove that change was essential. But some simila r humanitarian ideals
were involved in each case, at least on the part of certain re formers, plus a belief
that “free” wage labor was economical y more productive th an its forced equivalent.

What are the professed intentions behind the two emancipat ions, as reflected in the
initial documents below? Are they part of a single movemen t in world history, in
two rather different societies? Brazil’s movement came later , but with much less

two rather different societies? Brazil’s movement came later , but with much less
debate. It too, however, can be compared with other emanci pations in terms of principles, process, and probable results.

Both Russia and the United States experienced continued di sruption after these
major reforms. Russian serfs immediately complained of mis treatment, and their
protest continued for decades. As Southern whites regained political control in the
1870s after the Reconstruction period ended, African Americ ans in the region
experienced a loss of economic opportunities and other righ ts. Why was reform
incomplete in both countries? Brazilian ex-
slaves faced economic chal enges as wel
in a society that defined racism differently than the United S tates did. Today, Afro-

Brazilians with darker skin color continue to face discriminati
on, but there is less
sense that having some African ancestry puts everyone in a
single racial category.

Questions

1. How do the three emancipations compare? How do their j
ustifications differ?

Which pays more attention to the conditions likely to result f
rom emancipation?

In what sense can al three reform measures be judged to b
e rather limited, despite their role in ending long-
standing institutions of labor?

2. Why did Russia's peasants begin immediately protesting t
he conditions of
emancipation? What institution did they think could fix the p
roblems? Why did
the kinds of problems and expectations expressed in these p
rotests ultimately—a half-century later—
help lead to revolution?

3. In what ways did black protest in the American South diff
er from that of the
Russian peasants? What were some similar complaints?

4. What happened to the social structure (class, or race) of t
he three societies after
emancipation? How did postemancipation reactions of the R
ussian aristocracy and
the Southern planter class compare? Was either more violen
t than the other—and if so, for what reasons?

5. Why were there such gaps between the apparent intent o
f emancipations and their actual results?

6. To what extent was Brazilian emancipation distinctive? W
hat are the likely causes of distinctiveness?

For Further Discussion

1. What caused the emancipation movements? Were the ca uses basical y the same in
Russia, the United States, and Brazil?

2. Which political system was more open to protest, that of Russia or that of the
United States? Why did the protests of former serfs in Russia ultimately lead to
revolution, whereas protests by former slaves in the United States did not?

3. On balance, did reform fail or succeed in Russia? In the U nited States? In either
case, can you think of ways reform could have been done m ore successful y, with better long-term results?

4. What results did Brazilian emancipation and the abolitioni sm that preceded it
suggest for freed slaves and the postslavery economy?

THE EMANCIPATION MANIFESTO, 1861

Russia’s emancipation of the serfs had been debated off and on for almost a century,
as a reform element developed in the Western-
oriented aristocracy. The loss of the
Crimean War, when the industrial y sustained armies of Brit ain and France beat

Crimean War, when the industrial y sustained armies of Brit ain and France beat
Russia on its own southern border, accelerated the discussio n. A new, reform-minded
czar, Alexander II, resolved to act. The measure was the first of many reforms over

the next two decades. Nonetheless, the emancipation clearl
y took into account the
vital position of the Russian nobility; it was not intended to b
e a social revolution.

• • •

By the Grace of God We, Alexander II, Emperor and Autocrat
of Al Russia, King of
Poland, Grand Duke of Finland, etc., make known to al Our f
aithful subjects:
Cal ed by Divine Providence and by the sacred right of inheri
tance to the throne
of Our Russian ancestors, We vowed in Our heart to respond
to the mission which is
entrusted to Us and to surround with Our affection and Our I
mperial solicitude al
Our faithful subjects of every rank and condition, from the s
oldier who nobly
defends the country to the humble artisan who works in ind
ustry; from the career
official of the state to the plowman who til s the soil.

From Basil Dmytryshyn, Imperial Russia: A Sourcebook, 170
0–1917 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), 221–
23, 225.

Examining the condition of classes and professions comprisi
ng the state, We
became convinced that the present state legislation favors t
he upper and middle
classes, defines their obligations, rights, and privileges, but
does not equal y favor
the serfs, so designated because in part from old laws and i
n part from custom they
have been hereditarily subjected to the authority of landown

ers, who in turn were
obligated to provide for their wel being. Rights of nobles ha ve been hitherto very
broad and legal y il defined, because they stem from traditi on, custom, and the
good wil of the noblemen. In most cases this has led to the establishment of good
patriarchal relations based on the sincere, just concern and benevolence on the part
of the nobles, and on affectionate submission on the part of the peasants. Because of
the decline of the simplicity of morals, because of an increas e in the diversity of
relations, because of the weakening of the direct paternal at titude of nobles toward
the peasants, and because noble rights fel sometimes into t he hands of people
exclusively concerned with their personal interests, good rel ations weakened. The
way was opened for an arbitrariness burdensome for the pe asants and detrimental to
their welfare, causing them to be indifferent to the improve ment of their own existence....

We thus became convinced that the problem of improving th e condition of serfs
was a sacred inheritance bequeathed to Us by Our predeces sors, a mission which, in
the course of events, Divine Providence has cal ed upon Us t o fulfil .

We have begun this task by expressing Our confidence towa rd the Russian
nobility, which has proven on so many occasions its devotio n to the Throne, and its
readiness to make sacrifices for the welfare of the country.

We have left to the nobles themselves, in accordance with t heir own wishes, the
task of preparing proposals for the new organization of peas ant life—proposals that
would limit their rights over the peasants, and the realizatio n of which would inflict
on them [the nobles] some material losses. Our confidence was justified. Through
members of the gubernia committees, who had the trust of t he nobles' associations,
the nobility voluntarily renounced its right to own serfs. The se committees, after
col ecting the necessary data, have formulated proposals on a new arrangement for
serfs and their relationship with the nobles.

These proposals were diverse, because of the nature of the problem. They have
been compared, col ated, systematized, rectified and finaliz ed in the main

been compared, col ated, systematized, rectified and finaliz ed in the main
committee instituted for that purpose; and these new arran gements dealing with the
peasants and domestics of the nobility have been examined in the Governing Council.

Having invoked Divine assistance, We have resolved to exec ute this task.

On the basis of the above mentioned new arrangements, th e serfs wil receive in
time the ful rights of free rural inhabitants.

The nobles, while retaining their property rights on al the la nds belonging to them, grant the peasants perpetual use of their domicile in r eturn for a specified obligation; and, to assure their livelihood as wel as to guara ntee fulfil ment of their obligations toward the government, [the nobles] grant them a portion of arable land fixed by the said arrangements, as wel as other property.

While enjoying these land al otments, the peasants are oblig ed, in return, to fulfil obligations to the noblemen fixed by the same arrangement s. In this state, which is temporary, the peasants are temporarily bound.

At the same time, they are granted the right to purchase the ir domicile, and, with the consent of the nobles, they may acquire in ful ownershi p the arable lands and other properties which are al otted them for permanent use. Fol owing such acquisition of ful ownership of land, the peasants wil be fre ed from their obligations to the nobles for the land thus purchased and wil become free peasant landowners....

We leave it to the nobles to reach a friendly understanding with the peasants and to reach agreements on the extent of the land al otment an d the obligations stemming from it, observing, at the same time, the establish ed rules to guarantee the inviolability of such agreements....

What legal y belongs to nobles cannot be taken away from t hem without

adequate compensation, or through their voluntary concessi on; it would be contrary to al justice to use the land of the nobles without assuming responsibility for it.

And now We confidently expect that the freed serfs, on the e ve of a new future which is opening to them, wil appreciate and recognize the considerable sacrifices which the nobility has made on their behalf.

THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION, 1862

Abraham Lincoln did not come easily to the decision to ema ncipate the slaves. He was opposed to slavery, but his opinions had wavered over his adult life. He believed in property, and he did not want to antagonize the South mo re than necessary. But in the second year of the Civil War, with northern abolitionist s pressing for action, it became clear that emancipation might improve support for t he war and also help raise black resistance in the South, thus weakening the sece ssionist war effort.

Lincoln's proclamation differed from the czar's in many ways , reflecting a very different political and religious system. But it expressed som e similar cautions. As in Russia, this reform was fol owed by others, when the North t ook over the South during the Reconstruction period. As in Russia also, the refor m era ended by the late 1870s or the 1880s.

• • •

Whereas on the 22d day of September, A.D. 1862, a procla mation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other thin gs, the fol owing, to wit:

“That on the 1st day of January, A.D. 1863, al persons held as slaves within any

“That on the 1st day of January, A.D. 1863, al persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State the people whereof shal then be in rebel ion against the United States shal be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the executive government of the United States, including the mi litary and naval authority thereof, wil recognize and maintain the freedom o f such persons and wil do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom….

And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I d o order and declare that al persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are, and henceforward shal be, free; and that the Executive Gov ernment of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, wil recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free t o abstain from al violence, unless in necessary self-defense; and I recommend to them that, in al cases when al owed, they labor faithful y for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known that such persons of suitable condition
wil be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts,
positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of al sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the
Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerat e judgment of mankind
and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

JOACHIM NABUCO AND BRAZILIAN ABOLITIONISM

Joachim Nabuco was a leader in Brazilian abolitionism after a failed effort in 1871.

The fol owing extracts were part of a book he published in 1 881 in which he lays
out his arguments against slavery and his vision of a postsla very Brazil.

• • •

The need for rapid abolition is recognized by al who are diss atisfied with the
concept of Brazil as a new [colonial economy] in America. T he necessity of this
operation has been demonstrated, just as surgical science c an prove the need to
amputate a gangrenous arm or leg in order to save a human life.

Unfortunately for slavery, however, as it undermined the ent ire nation, it

weakened itself as wel ; while corrupting everything else, it was also self-corrupting.

As a result, [this] proslavery army is a mixed and undisciplin ed mob eager to flee
the field of combat. The clientele of slavery are ashamed of l iving upon the scraps
they are tossed, of depending upon slavery’s indulgence. Th e people who survive like
vagrants on lands not their own, when given the hope of leg itimately possessing
those lands where they are now suffered to squat as pariahs , wil reject their present serflike status.

From Joachim Nabuco, Abolitionism: The Brazilian Antislaver y Struggle, trans.

Robert Conrad (Urbana: University of Il inois Press, 1977), 14 8, 149, 150–51, 171, 173.

In regard to the several social forces, slavery has made the m so weak, timid, and
unreliable that they wil be the first to welcome any change which brings their own
downfal and reconstructs them with new elements….

Public opinion, as it is now developing, possesses strength a nd has its effects upon
the government. It represents the nation before the world, h olds within its grasp the
leadership of a huge political complex which would be amen able to emancipation if

leadership of a huge political complex which would be amen able to emancipation if
it were not for the coffee districts in the provinces of São Pa ulo, Minas Gerais, and

Rio de Janeiro, a political mass which is each day more and more impel ed by the
national conscience to abandon the orbit which slavery mar ked out for it.

However vast the power of slavery, however impressive the credit it can
command in the banks, however huge the value of its mortg aged estates, it stands
like a dogmatic aberration in the face of established truth. A n ounce of science is
worth more, in the final analysis, than a ton of faith. Similarl y, the smal est particle of high-
minded sentiment on behalf of humanity wil eventual y des troy the largest
monopoly erected against humanity's interests. I do not attri bute any metaphysical
power to principles when there is nobody to impose them, w hen the human mass to
which such principles might be applied is unreceptive to the m. Yet, setting private
interests aside, I do not elevate too highly the character, ten dencies, and aspirations
of the Brazilian people when I say that al their sympathies a re on the side of freedom and against slavery.

Yet the fol owing truth must also be recognized: the reluctan t attitude of the government—
the one force capable of destroying slavery—
the stil inconsequential
extent of its response to public opinion, and the slowness of the latter's development
do not al ow us to hope that the break between the govern ment and slavery wil
occur soon. If the abolitionist pressure did not exist, the gov ernment would delay

even more than it does. Consequently, our strength wil gro
w as we are able to
arouse such opinion, as we cal each class to action based u
pon its understanding
that slavery not only degrades our country but undermines i
t physical y. The
instrument of success exists and is known to us; this instru
ment is power. The way to
produce power, which is also known to us, is through public
concern. What remains
to be done is to endow that public opinion with the needed e
nergy, to draw it out of
the lassitude which renders it useless, to prove to it that prol
onged inactivity is suicidal.

Compare the Brazil of today and its slavery with the ideal of
a motherland which
we, the abolitionists, uphold. The latter is a country where al
  are free, where
European immigration, attracted by the openness of our inst
itutions and by the
freedom of our system, wil endlessly send to the tropics a c
urrent of lively,
energetic, and healthy Caucasian blood which we can absor
b without danger,
instead of that Chinese wave with which the large landholde
rs hope to contaminate
and corrupt our race even further. What we wish is a country
 which may work in
her own unique way for the good of humanity and the devel
opment of South America….

[The] past whose col apse we are now witnessing wil give w
ay to an order of
things founded upon an entirely different concept of our duti
es toward life,

property, the individual, the family, personal rights, honor, a nd individual integrity.

That past wil make way for a society in which there is a new regard for our
fel owman, for the individual before the nation, for personal freedom, for
civilization, for equal legal protection, for established social achievements, for
humanity itself, which inspires us with the wil to participate in this immense
heritage of our species, which in fact tacitly delivers this her itage over to the protection of each one of us.

The abolitionists include al those who believe in a Brazil wit hout slaves, al those
who anticipate the miracles of free labor, al those who suffe r slavery as a detested
vassalage imposed upon the entire nation by some in the int erests of some. They
include those who now gasp in the foul air which slaves and masters freely breathe

include those who now gasp in the foul air which slaves and masters freely breathe

—
those who do not believe that Brazil with slavery gone, wil li e down to die, as did
the Roman in the age of the Caesars because he had lost his liberty.

This means that we are seeking our country’s highest intere sts, her civilization, the
future rightful y hers, the mission to which her place in Ame rica cal s her. But,

between us and those who are blocking the path, who wil w in? This, indeed, is the
very enigma of Brazil's national destiny. Slavery injected fan aticism into her
bloodstream, and she is now doing nothing to grasp control of her fate from those
blind and indifferent forces which now silently lead her on.

BRAZILIAN ABOLITION LAW NO. 3353, ABOLISHING SLAVERY IN BRAZIL, MAY 13, 1888

The Princess Imperial Regent, in the name of His Majesty the Emperor Dom Pedro II,
makes known to al subjects of the Empire that the General Assembly has decreed,
and she has sanctioned, the fol owing law:

Art. 1. From the date of this law slavery is declared extinct i n Brazil.

Art. 1. Al provisions to the contrary are revoked.

She orders, therefore, al the authorities to whom the knowl edge and execution of
this Law belong to carry it out, and cause it to be ful y and e xactly executed and observed.

RUSSIAN PEASANTS AFTER EMANCIPATION: PEASANT PETITI ONS

Discontent with the conditions of emancipation surfaced alm ost immediately in
Russia. For a time, petitions rained in. Over a longer period, major peasant protests
surged, in which remaining estates might be occupied and r ecords of redemption

payments that peasants owed for the land they had receive d burned.

The petitions require some care in interpretation. They inclu de detail that needs to
be sorted out to find the main points. They include some hy perbole, because the
peasants hoped to win the czar’s attention by elaborate exp ressions of trust and
obedience. What were the main grievances? How did peasa nts decide they could best define the justice of their case?

• • •

PETITION FROM PEASANTS IN BALASHOV DISTRICT (SARATO V PROVINCE) TO GRAND DUKE KONSTANTIN

NIKOLAEVICH, 25 JANUARY 1862

Your Imperial Excel ency! Most gracious sire! Grand Duke Ko nstantin Nikolaevich!

Most magnanimous prince, given by God for the welfare of p eople in the Russian
Empire! The countless acts of mercy and humanitarianism o f Your Imperial
Excel ency toward the loyal subjects have emboldened us to fal to your feet and plead:

Show your steadfast and just protection of oppressed huma nity! Fol owing the
example of our fathers, grandfathers and ancestors, we hav e always and without
complaint obeyed the laws of Russian monarchs and the aut hority of its rulers....

The monarch’s mercy—
which has no precedent in the chronicles of al peoples in the universe—
has now changed the attitude of our squire, who has reduce d us 1,500

peasants to a pitiable condition.... After being informed of th e Imperial manifesto
on the emancipation of peasants from serfdom in 1861 (whi ch was explained to us
by the constable of township 2 of Balashov District), we rece ived this [news] with
jubilation, as a special gift from heaven, and expressed our wil ingness to obey the

jubilation, as a special gift from heaven, and expressed our wil ingness to obey the
squire’s wil in every respect during the coming two-
year [transition] period [and to
remain] on the fertile land which we occupy, where we could realise our life.... [sic]

But from this moment, our squire ordered that the land be c ut off from the entire
township. But this is absolutely intolerable for us: it not only denies us profit, but
threatens us with a catastrophic future. He began to hold re peated meetings and

[tried to] force us to sign that we agreed to accept the abov e land al otment. But,
upon seeing so unexpected a change, and bearing in mind t he gracious manifesto,
we refused. … But when [the nobles] saw that this did not s ucceed, they had a
company of soldiers sent in and said that they had been sen

t—by the Tsar!—to
restore peace between us and the squires. … Then [Col.] Glo
bbe came from their
midst, threatened us with exile to Siberia, and ordered the s
oldiers to strip the
peasants and to punish seven people by flogging in the mos
t inhuman manner. They
stil have not regained consciousness.

From Gregory L. Freeze, ed., From Supplication to Revolution
: A Documentary
Social History of Imperial Russia (New York: Oxford Universit
y Press, 1988), 171–

79. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

The inhuman acts and intolerable oppression have forced us
 to fal to the sacred
feet of Your Imperial Excel ency: 1,500 voices most humbly
ask for just, most august
defense, which can save weeping families from certain deat
h, and [we ask] that You issue a decree [on our case].

PETITION FROM PEASANTS IN PODOSINOVKA (VORONEZH P
ROVINCE) TO ALEXANDER I , MAY 1863

The most merciful manifesto of Your Imperial Majesty from 1
9 February 1861, with
the published rules, put a limit to the enslavement of the pe
ople in blessed Russia.

But some former serfowners—
who desire not to improve the peasants’ life, but to
oppress and ruin them—
apportion land contrary to the laws, choose the best land
from al the fields for themselves, and give the poor peasant
s (who are just emerging

from their domination) the worst and least usable lands. … Of our fields and
resources, [our landlord] chose the best places from amidst our strips and, like a
cooking ring in a hearth, carved off 300 dessiatines for hers elf. Other places—

characterized by sand, hil s, knol s and ravines (with the spa rsest amount of hayland)—
were designated as the peasant al otment; altogether, inclu ding the
household plots, we were given four dessiatines per soul an d assessed a quitrent of
12 rubles per soul. But our community refused to accept so ruinous an al otment and
requested that we be given an al otment in accordance with the local Statute [of
emancipation], without injury, even if the quitrent must be i ncreased. … The provincial governor—
without making any investigation and without interrogating a single person—
ordered that the birch rods be brought and that the punishm ent
commence, which was carried out with cruelty and merciles sness. They punished up
to 200 men and women; 80 people were at four levels (with 500, 400, 300 and 200

blows); some received lesser punishment.…

Having explained the inhuman acts of our local authorities a nd our final
ruination through the oppressive al otment of unusable land in strips, we dare to
implore you, Orthodox emperor and our merciful father, not

to reject the petition of
a community with 600 souls, including wives and children….

AFRICAN AMERICANS AFTER SLAVERY: PETITIONS IN THE SO UTH

During the 1870s, former slaves often petitioned the federal government for new
opportunities, in a context in which Reconstruction state gov ernments al owed them

opportunities, in a context in which Reconstruction state gov ernments al owed them
voice. While most land remained in the hands of former plan tation owners, blacks
managed to purchase some. They also set up schools and ot her community
institutions. But the end of Reconstruction showed how vuln erable the former slave population was.

JOINT AFFIDAVIT FROM GEORGE UNDERWOOD, BEN HARRIS, AND ISIAH FULLER

Caddo Parish, La., August 3, 1875

We worked, or made a contract to work, and make a crop on shares on Mr.

McMoring’s place, and worked for one-
third (⅓) of the crop, and he
(McMoring) was to find us al of our provisions; and in July, 1 875, we was
working alone in the field, and Mr. McMoring and McBounton came to us
and says, “Wel , boys, you al got to get away from here; an d that they had
gone as far as they could go, and you al must live agreeabl

e, or you shal
take what fol ows”; and the two white men went and got stic
ks and guns,
and told us that we must leave the place; and we told them
that we would
not leave it, because we don’t want to give up our crop for n
othing; and they
told us that we had better leave, or we would not get anythi
ng; and we
wanted to have justice, but he would not let us have justice;
and we told
them that we would get judges to judge the crop, to say wh
at it is worth;
and the white men told us that no judge should come on his
place; and we
did not want to leave the place, but they beat Isiah Ful er, a
nd whipped him,
and then we got afraid, and we left the place; and we got ab
out thirty acres
in cotton, and the best cotton crop in that part of the parish;
and we have about twenty-
nine acres of corn, and about the best corn in the parish, an
d it
is ripe, and the fodder ready to pul , and our cotton laid by;
and runned us
off from the place, and told us not to come back any more; a
nd we were due
McMoring the sum of one hundred and eighty dol ars ($180)
and they told
us that if they ever heard of it any more that they would fix
us; and al the
time that we were living and working on the place they woul
d not half feed
us; and we had to pay for al , or half of our rashings, or what
we had to eat,
and that is al that was due them for; and we worked for the

m as though we
were slaves, and then treated like dogs al the time.

MEMORIAL FROM ALABAMA NEGROES

To His Excel ency the President of the United States, and the
 honorable the Congress of the United States:

The colored people of the State of Alabama, who by virtue o
f the three latest
amendments to the Constitution of the United States becam
e emancipated, and also
became citizens of the United States, feeling anxiously and
solemnly impressed by
their past and present condition in the State of Alabama, an
d by the grave and
menacing dangers that now surround and threaten them an
d their constitutional
rights, have as a race and as a people assembled together i
n convention to consider
their situation, and to take solemn counsel together as to w
hat it becomes them to do for their self-preservation.

From Herbert Aptheker, ed., A Documentary History of the N
egro People in the
United States (New York: Citadel Press, 1951), 586, 600–
603.

We, therefore, for your better information upon the subject,
do humbly present
for your consideration and action the fol owing memorial:
That as a race, and as citizens, we never have enjoyed, exce
pt partial y,

That as a race, and as citizens, we never have enjoyed, exce
pt partial y,
imperfectly, and local y, our political and civil rights in this S

tate. Our right to vote
in elections has been, in a large portion of this State, denied , abridged, and rendered
difficult and dangerous ever since we became voters. The m eans used by our
political opponents to destroy or impair their right have bee n various; but have
chiefly consisted of violence in the form of secret assassinati on, lynching,
intimidation, malicious and frivolous prosecutions and arrest s, and by depriving or
threatening to deprive us of employment and the renting of lands, which many of us,
in our poverty and distress, were unable to disregard. These acts of lawlessness have
been repeated and continued since our first vote in 1868, an d their effect has been
such that from ten to fifteen thousand of the votes of our ra ce have in each election
been either repressed or been given under compulsion to ou r political opponents....

Nor have we fared better in our civil rights of life, liberty, an d property which
have come for adjudication before the State courts. It is true that republican judges
have general y presided over the superior courts of this Stat e, and have general y
shown a disposition to do us justice, but even these have be en to some extent,
warped by local pressure. But the main reasons for this failu re of justice are that the
sheriffs, probate judges and clerks of courts have almost uni versal y, throughout the
State, in plain violation of State laws, failed or refused to put men of our race on

grand and petit juries in most of the counties in Alabama, and it has followed, as a consequence, that the lives, liberties, and property of black men have been decided by grand and petit juries composed exclusively of white men who are their political opponents. In controversies between our race and white men, and in criminal trials where the accused or the injured is a black man, it is almost if not quite impossible for a black man to obtain justice.... Our lives, liberties, and properties are made to hang upon the capricious, perilous, and prejudiced judgments of juries composed of a hostile community of ex-slaveholders who disdain to recognize the colored race as their peers in anything, who look upon us as being by nature an inferior race, and by right their chattel property....

Pressed around with these wrongs, misfortunes, and dangers, and solemnly impressed with their gravity, no resource or hope suggests itself to us but an earnest, prayerful, and we hope not unavailing, appeal to the President and the Congress of the United States, who still have the power and the agencies that may, in some measure, right our wrongs and diminish our misfortunes.

The question which our case and condition presents to you is simply this: whether our constitutional rights as citizens are to be a reality or a mockery, a protection and a boon or a danger and a curse; whether we are to be freemen in fact or only in name; and whether the late amendments to the Constitution are to be practical y

enforced or to become a nul ity and stand only “as dead lett ers on the statute-book.”

CHAPTER 25

RUSSIAN AND JAPANESE CONSERVATISM

Conservatism is not a standard world history topic. However , conservatism
experienced a number of crucial changes in the long ninetee nth century, in a number
of different societies, while remaining a vigorous force, som etimes a dominant force,
in political life. The need to articulate reactions to change an d foreign influence, and
the increasing ability to use nationalism to help shape conse rvative response, were
widespread developments that warrant explicit comparative treatment. Japanese and
Russian conservatisms were important in their own right, bu t they also raise larger issues.

Conservatism is as old as human politics. Any political situat ion involves some
people a bit more eager for change and others insistent that current arrangements
should be preserved. These latter are conservatives. Some p olitical cultures, because
of an emphasis on order, are more dominated by conservati sm than others—China
before the twentieth century is an example frequently cited. But the general phenomenon is a common one in history.

During the nineteenth century so many changes were occur ring, because of new
political ideas (including ideas spread by the French Revoluti

on), industrialization,
and imperialism, that conservatives in many areas were incli ned to become more
explicit about their viewpoint and even to organize as a polit ical movement. Formal
conservatism, as opposed to more informal groupings of like -minded leaders, thus
emerged in Europe during the French revolutionary era, arou nd 1800. Further,
outside Europe, pressures to import political and social ideas and institutions from
the dynamic West prompted conservatives to worry about fo reignness as wel as
about change in general. Many conservatives found themsel ves defending against
Western corruption what they saw as vital elements of their own cultural and political traditions.

Because political changes and Western influence were partic ularly widespread in
Japan from the Meiji era (beginning in 1868) onward and in Russia under Alexander II (1855–
81), conservatism in these two countries gained unusual im portance and
complexity. Conservatives were forced to define what aspect s of the contemporary
West and what resultant reform proposals were particularly objectionable. But they
might also identify certain ingredients that, altered to preser ve national essentials,
could be accepted as change. In both countries conservative s wielded great
influence, shaping much of the reform process in Japan and, in Russia, preventing certain kinds of reforms altogether.

Conservatism in the nineteenth century was rarely simple-minded. Many
conservatives recognized the need for some change: they m erely insisted that many
older values and institutions should be essential y preserved and that change should
not be blindly embraced. Many Russian conservatives after 1861, for example,
clearly recognized that the emancipation of the serfs had be en a desirable reform;
they did not argue for a return to serfdom, though they rarel y wanted many more
concessions to the aggrieved peasantry. Russian conservativ es also saw that their
country should participate in the kinds of scientific research being spearheaded in
Western Europe; there was danger in lagging behind here. Ja panese conservatives
were even more flexible: they granted that the old system o f feudalism and the

were even more flexible: they granted that the old system o f feudalism and the
shogunate should not be restored (though they sometimes s ought to maintain some
of the older values, including military honor). Conservatives in both countries
utilized the new force of nationalism. Interpreting modern co nservatism as it began
to develop in response to the massive changes of the long n ineteenth century thus
requires some subtlety: what did conservatives insist on kee ping intact, and where were they wil ing to bend?

Russian conservatives were in the ascendancy after Alexand er II was assassinated

by terrorists in 1881. Although they did not oppose al chang e (industrialization
continued), they definitely resisted any further alterations to the political and social
structure. Their obstinacy helped develop an atmosphere of inflexibility and
repression that led to the revolutions of 1905 and 1907. Jap anese conservatives
gained ground in the 1880s also, with the backing of the em peror, amid a
widespread sense that disorder was spreading, for example, in the schools.

Russian conservatism was not uniform, though al its leading spokesmen favored
nationalism, czarist autocracy, and the Orthodox church. So me conservative
nationalists praised the Russian people in the abstract while defining distinctive
views of the state and progress. Leaders such as Nikolai Dan ilevsky, in the 1860s,
bitterly opposed the West, but they could grant the need for some limited change.

After the terrorist assassination of czar Alexander II in 1881, however, Russian
conservatism became more defensive. Constantine Pobedon ostsev became Russia’s
conservative leader. A lawyer, he gained positions both in th e government and in the
Orthodox church, spurring reactionary policies between 188 1 and 1905.

Pobedonostsev was outspoken in his hostility to key Western principles and institutions.

In Japan, Yamagata Arimoto was the most conservative of th e leading statesmen
of the Meiji era and was closely associated with the army. H e, too, objected to many
Western values, but he also saw how certain Western practic es, such as universal
military conscription, though radical in terms of Japanese tra dition, could actual y
benefit a conservative Japanese state. Here, he tried to sho w how history set a
Japanese precedent for a practice that was apparently new.

Comparing these two conservative currents requires the no w-familiar balance
between noting the important points they have in common —do Russian and
Japanese leaders agree about Western political fal acies, for example?—and
discerning the ways in which they differ in degree of openne ss to limited change.

Questions

1. How did Danilevsky define Russian superiority? What, in h is view, were Russia's key strengths?

2. What did Danilevsky mean by freedom? What recent refor m was he wil ing to
defend? What few aspects of the West did he admire?

3. How do Danilevsky and Pobedonostsev compare as Russi an nationalists and
conservatives? Did they agree on the qualities of a strong st ate? How do their emphases differ?

4. Which version of Russian conservatism do Yamagata Arim oto's views most
resemble: Danilevsky's or Pobedonostsev's?

5. Why and how did Russian conservatism change between t he 1860s (Danilevsky, and the 1880s (Pobedonostsev)?

6. What aspects of Western politics did Yamagata Arimoto, D anilevsky, and

6. What aspects of Western politics did Yamagata Arimoto, D anilevsky, and
Pobedonostsev al criticize? Did they agree in their reactions to the West?

7. How did Yamagata Arimoto and Pobedonostsev view votin g and political parties and the remedies for divisiveness?

8. How did Yamagata Arimoto's Confucianism compare with Pobedonostsev's
conservative ideals? Would Russian conservatives' advice to soldiers be different

from Yamagata Arimoto’s? What are the implications of thes e differences? By
Russian conservative standards, is it accurate to cal Yamag ata Arimoto a conservative at al ?

9. What kinds of differences in national setting did the two c onservative movements
suggest? In which country did conservatives have an easier time defending the status quo in the 1880s and 1890s?

For Further Discussion

1. What is conservative nationalism? How does it differ from liberal or radical nationalism?

2. Why did both Japanese and Russian conservatives empha size the importance of an emperor and a strong state?

3. What aspects of the West were most likely to be criticized by foreign observers in
the late nineteenth century? Are the same aspects stil likely to be criticized today, or has the list changed?

4. Can Japan’s greater success in combining change and sta bility be traced in the
nature of its conservatism? How did Russia’s version of cons ervatism play a role in
the conditions that led to major revolution?

DANILEVSKY

The fol owing selection was authored by an ardent Slavic na tionalist, Nikolai Danilevsky, in a multiple-edition book cal ed Russia and Europe, first issued in 1869.

Danilevsky asserts the special virtues of the Slavic peoples as against other Europeans, and the dominance of Russia among the Slavs. E lements of his argument might seem comical: he twists history, he glosses over ongo ing problems such as peasant discontent after emancipation, and he ludicrously p romises stability in a country almost foredoomed to revolution. But Danilevsky's v iews about Russian distinctiveness and Western evil were widely shared, even b y people opposed to the existing czarist regime. The complexities of his outlook were widely shared also, as he talked about some selective borrowing from the West. Co mplexities of this sort outlived the czarist regime and flourished after the Commun ist revolution of 1917.

• • •

And now let us turn to the Slav world, and chiefly to Russia, i ts only independent representative, in order to examine the results and the prom ises of this world, a world stil only at the beginning of its cultural-historical life. We must examine it from the viewpoint of the above four foci of reference: religi on, culture, politics, and

socioeconomic structure, in order to elucidate what we right ful y expect as wel as hope from the Slav cultural-historical type.

Religion constituted the most essential element of ancient R ussian life, and at the present time, the overwhelming spiritual interest of the ordi nary Russian is also involved in it; in truth, one cannot but wonder at the ignoran ce and the impertinence of these people who could insist (to gratify the ir fantasies) on the religious indifference of the Russian people.

From an objective, factual viewpoint, the Russian and the m ajority of Slav peoples became, with the Greeks, the chief guardians of the living tradition of religious truth, Orthodoxy, and in this way they continued th e high cal ing, which was the destiny of Israel and Byzantium: to be the chosen p eople....

From Nikolai Danilevsky, Russia and Europe, in The Mind of Modern Russia, ed.

Hans Kohn (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1 955), 200–211.

... The religious aspect of the cultural activity belongs to the Slav cultural type and to Russia in particular; it is its inalienable achievement, founded on the psychology of its people and on its guardianship of religious truth....

Whatever the future may bring we are entitled, on the evide nce of the past alone,
to consider the Slavs among the most gifted families of the human race in political
ability. Here we may turn our attention to the special charac ter of this political
ability and show how it manifested itself during the growth o f the Russian state. The
Russians do not send out colonists to create new political so cieties, as the Greeks did
in antiquity or the English in modern times. Russia does not have colonial
possessions, like Rome or like England. The Russian state fro m early Muscovite times
on has been Russia herself, gradual y, irresistibly spreading on al sides, settling neighboring non-
settled territories, and assimilating into herself and into her national boundaries foreign populations. This basic characte r of Russian expansion
was misunderstood because of the distortion of the original Russian point of view
through Europeanization, the origin of every evil in Russia....

But the expansion of the state, its attainment of stability, str ength, and power,
constitutes only one aspect of political activity. It has stil an other one, consisting of
the establishment of equal relationships between the citizen s themselves and
between them and the state, i.e., in the establishment of civ il and political freedom.

A people not endowed with this freedom cannot be said to p ossess a healthy
political sense. Is the Russian people capable of freedom?

Natural y our “wel -
wishers” give a negative answer: some regard slavery as a natural element of the Russians, and others are afraid, or pr etend to be afraid, that
freedom in Russian hands must lead to al sorts of excesses and abuses. But on the
basis of Russian history and with knowledge of the views an d traits of the Russian
people, one can only form an opinion diametrical y opposed to this view—namely,
that there hardly ever has existed or exists a people so capa ble of enduring such a
large share of freedom as the Russians and so little inclined to abuse it, due to their
ability and habit to obey, their respect and trust in the autho rities, their lack of love
for power, and their loathing of interference in matters wher e they do not consider
themselves competent. If we look into the causes of al politi cal troubles, we shal
find their root not in the striving after freedom, but in the lo ve for power and the
vain cravings of human beings to interfere in affairs that are beyond their comprehension.…

This nature of the Russian people is the true reason why Rus sia is the only state
which never had (and in al probability never wil have) a pol itical revolution, i.e., a
revolution having as its aim the limitation of the power of th e ruler.…

With legality in the succession of the throne secured… and fi nal y with the
liberation of the peasants, al the reasons which in former ti mes had agitated the

people disappeared; and even an ordinary rebel ion, going b eyond the limits of a
regrettable misunderstanding, has become impossible in Ru ssia so long as the moral
character of the Russian people does not change….

… Thus we may conclude that the Russian people, by their a ttitude towards the
power of the state, by their ability to sacrifice to it their own personal interests, and
by their attitude towards the use of political and civil freedo m, are gifted with wonderful political sense.

In the socioeconomic sphere, Russia is the only large state w hich has solid
ground under its feet, in which there are no landless masses , and in which,
consequently, the social edifice does not rest on the misery of the majority of the
citizens and on the insecurity of their situation. In Russia onl y there cannot and does
not exist any contradiction between political and economic i deals. … The factors
that give such superiority to the Russian social structure ove r the European, and give it an un-
shakable stability, are the peasant’s land and its common o wnership. On this
health of Russia’s socioeconomic structure we found our hop e for the great socioeconomic significance of the Slav cultur al-historical type. This type has been able for
the first time to create a just and normal system of human a ctivity, which embraces
not only human relations in the moral and political sphere, b ut also man’s mastery
of nature, which is a means of satisfying human needs and r equirements. Thus it

establishes not only formal equality in the relations between citizens, but a real and concrete equality.

However, as regards the prominent place of the Slav cultural-historical type in the field of culture proper, one must admit that so far the Russian and other Slav achievements in the sciences and in the arts are insignificant in comparison with the accomplishments of the two great cultural types, the Greek and the European....

Scientific and artistic activity can thrive only under conditions of leisure, of an overflow of forces that remain free from daily toil. Could much leisure be left over among Russians and Slavs?... All these considerations fully answer, it seems to me, the question why until now Russia and the other Slav countries could not occupy a respected position in purely cultural activities. ... But indications of these aptitudes, of these spiritual forces, which are necessary for brilliant achievements in the fields of science and art are now indisputably present among the Slav peoples in spite of all the unfavorable conditions of their life; and, consequently, we are justified in expecting that with a change in these conditions, these peoples will bring forth remarkable creations....

The Slav cultural type has already produced enough examples of artistic and, to a lesser degree, scientific achievements to allow us to conclude that it has attained a significant degree of development in these fields. The relativ

e youth of the race and
the concentration of al its forces upon other, more urgent ty pes of activity have not,
until now, given the Slavs the opportunity of acquiring cultur al significance, in the
exact meaning of the phrase. This should not embarrass us; rather, it points to the
right path in our development. As long as there is no strong foundation, we cannot
and we must not think of the erection of a durable edifice; w e can only set up
temporary buildings, which cannot be expected to display th e talents of the builder
in every respect. The political independence of the race is th e indispensable
foundation of culture, and consequently al the Slav forces must be directed towards
this goal. Independence is indispensable ... [for] without the consciousness of Slav
racial unity, as distinct from other races, an independent cul ture is impossible....

The requisite preliminary achievement of political independe nce has stil another
importance in the cultural as wel as in al other spheres: th e struggle against the Germano-
Roman world (without which Slav independence is impossibl e) wil help
to eradicate the cancer of imitativeness and the servile attit ude towards the West,

to eradicate the cancer of imitativeness and the servile attit ude towards the West,
which through unfavorable conditions has eaten its way into the Slav body and soul.

POBEDONOSTSEV

Constantine Pobedonostsev (1827–1907) was a statesman and jurist, trained in the law. He tutored the future czar Alexander II, then served in the holy synod of the Russian Orthodox Church (1880–1905), where he became the leading spokesman of religious orthodoxy, nationalism, and autocracy. He had great influence over czar Alexander III and encouraged policies of rigorous censorship, persecution of religious minorities, and repression of all political opposition. He also supported an activist foreign policy designed to enhance Russia's national prestige. He wrote widely on Russian law and also authored a number of attacks on Western rationalism and liberalism.

• • •

What is this freedom by which so many minds are agitated, which inspires so many insensate actions, so many wild speeches, which leads the people so often to misfortune? In the democratic sense of the word, freedom is the right of political power, or, to express it otherwise, the right to participate in the government of the State. This universal aspiration for a share in the government has no constant limitations, and seeks no definite issue, but incessantly extends. … Forever extending its base, the new Democracy now aspires to universal suffrage—a fatal error, and one of the most remarkable in the history of mankind. By thi

s means, the political
power so passionately demanded by Democracy would be s hattered into a number
of infinitesimal bits, of which each citizen acquires a single o ne. What wil he do
with it, then? How wil he employ it? In the result it has undo ubtedly been shown
that in the attainment of this aim Democracy violates its sac red formula of

“Freedom indissolubly joined with Equality.” It is shown that this apparently equal
distribution of “freedom” among al involves the total destru ction of equality. Each
vote, representing an inconsiderable fragment of power, by i tself signifies nothing;
an aggregation of votes alone has a relative value. The resul t may be likened to the
general meetings of shareholders in public companies. By th emselves individuals are
ineffective, but he who controls a number of these fragment ary forces is master of
al power, and directs al decisions and dispositions. We may wel ask in what
consists the superiority of Democracy. Everywhere the stron gest man becomes
master of the State; sometimes a fortunate and resolute ge neral, sometimes a
monarch or administrator with knowledge, dexterity, a clear plan of action, and a
determined wil ; in a Democracy, the real rulers are the dext erous manipulators of
votes, with their placemen, the mechanics who so skil ful y operate the hidden
springs which move the puppets in the arena of democratic elections. Men of this

kind are ever ready with loud speeches lauding equality; in r
eality, they rule the
people as any despot or military dictator might rule it.... Exp
erience proves a very
different thing. The history of mankind bears witness that th
e most necessary and fruitful reforms—
the most durable measures—
emanated from the supreme wil of
statesmen, or from a minority enlightened by lofty ideas and
 deep knowledge, and
that, on the contrary, the extension of the representative pri
nciple is accompanied
by an abasement of political ideas and the vulgarization of o
pinions in the mass of the electors....

From Konstantin P. Pobyedonostsev, Reflections of a Russian Statesman, trans.

Robert Crozier Long (London: Grant Richard, 1898), 23–30, 32–46, 52–54, 62–74.

... Even in the classic countries of Parliamentarism [democra
cy] it would satisfy

... Even in the classic countries of Parliamentarism [democra
cy] it would satisfy
not one of [its criteria]. The elections in no way express the
wil of the electors. The
popular representatives are in no way restricted by the opini
ons of their
constituents, but are guided by their own views and conside
rations, modified by the
tactics of their opponents. In reality, ministers are autocratic
, and they rule, rather
than are ruled by Parliament. They attain power, and lose po
wer, not by virtue of

the wil of the people, but through immense influence… and they fear no censure
while they enjoy the support in Parliament of a majority whic h they maintain by the
distribution of bounties from the rich tables which the State has put at their
disposal. In reality, the ministers are as irresponsible as the representatives of the
people. Mistakes, abuse of power, and arbitrary acts, are of daily occurrence, yet
how often do we hear of the grave responsibility of a ministe r? It may be once in
fifty years a minister is tried for his crimes, with a result con temptible when
compared with the celebrity gained by the solemn procedur e….

… It is sad to think that even in Russia there are men who as pire to the
establishment of this falsehood among us; that our professo rs glorify to their young
pupils representative government as the ideal of political sci ence; that our
newspapers pursue it…, under the name of justice and order , without troubling to
examine without prejudice the working of the parliamentary machine. Yet even
where centuries have sanctified its existence, faith already d ecays; the Liberal
intel igence exalts it, but the people groans under its despot ism, and recognizes its
falsehood. We may not see, but our children and grandchildr en assuredly wil see,
the overthrow of this idol, which contemporary thought in its vanity continues stil to worship….

The prevalent doctrine of the perfection of Democracy and of democratic
government stands on the same delusive foundation. This doctrine presupposes the
capacity of the people to understand subtleties of political science which have a
clear and substantial existence in the minds of its apostles only. Precision of
knowledge is attainable only by the few minds which constitute the aristocracy of
intel ect; the mass, always and everywhere, is vulgus, and its conceptions of necessity are vulgar.

Democracy is the most complicated and the most burdensome system of
government recorded in the history of humanity. For this reason it has never
appeared save as a transitory manifestation, with few exceptions giving place before
long to other systems. It is in no way surprising. The duty of the State is to act and
to ordain: its dispositions are manifestations of a single wil ; without this,
government is inconceivable. But how can a multitude of men, or a popular
assembly act with a single wil ?… Such conditions inevitably lead to anarchy, from
which society can be saved alone by dictatorship—
that is, by the rehabilitation of
autocracy in the government of the world.

YAMAGATA ARIMOTO

Yamagata Arimoto (1838–
1922) was born a samurai but backed the Meiji side in the turmoil of 1860s. He studied military science in Europe and i

n the 1870s led in the
restructuring of the Japanese army, copying German organiz
ational models. In the
1880s he concentrated more on domestic affairs, encouragi
ng more Confucian
elements in the schools and repressing political opposition.
He also supported
Japanese imperialism and a strong military influence in the g
overnment. Clearly
opposed to the more westernizing reformers in Japan, Yama
gata Arimoto has been
the subject of some debate among historians of Japan, who
argue about whether a

the subject of some debate among historians of Japan, who
argue about whether a

“conservative” label is real y appropriate for this formative a
nd dynamic leader in modern Japanese history.

• • •

On Military Conscription, 1872

In the system in effect in our country in the ancient past eve
ryone was a soldier. In
an emergency the emperor became the Marshal, mobilizing
the able-bodied youth
for military service and thereby suppressing rebel ion. When
the campaign was over
the men returned to their homes and their occupations. …
When the State suffers
disaster, the people cannot escape being affected. Thus, the
people can ward off
disaster to themselves by striving to ward off disaster to the
State. And where there

is a state, there is military defense; and if there is military defense there must be
military service. It follows, therefore, that the law providing for a militia is the law of nature and not an accidental, man-made law. As for the system itself, it should be
made after a survey of the past and the present, and adapted to the time and
circumstance. The Occidental countries established their military systems after
several hundred years of study and experience. Thus, their regulations are exact and
detailed. However, the difference in geography rules out their wholesale adoption
here. We should now select only what is good in them, use them to supplement our
traditional military system, establish an army and a navy, require all males who attain the age of twenty—
irrespective of class—to register for military service, and
have them in readiness for all emergencies. Heads of communities and chiefs of
villages should keep this aim in mind and they should instruct the people so that
they will understand the fundamental principle of national defense.

From Ryusako Tsunoda, William Theodore de Bary, and Donald Keene, eds., Sources
of Japanese Tradition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), 704–7, 709–10, 712–
13. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

Precepts for Soldiers and Sailors, 1882

1. The soldier and sailor should consider loyalty their essential duty. Who that is
born in this land can be wanting in the spirit of grateful servi

ce to it? No soldier or
sailor, especial y, can be considered efficient unless this spir
it be strong within him.

A soldier or a sailor in whom this spirit is not strong, howeve
r skil ed in art or
proficient in science, is a mere puppet; and a body of soldier
s or sailors wanting in
loyalty, however wel ordered and disciplined it may be, is in
an emergency no
better than a rabble. Remember that, as the protection of th
e state and the
maintenance of its power depend upon the strength of its ar
ms, the growth or
decline of this strength must affect the nation's destiny for g
ood or for evil; therefore
neither be led astray by current opinions nor meddle in politi
cs, but with single
heart fulfil your essential duty of loyalty, and bear in mind t
hat duty is weightier
than a mountain, while death is lighter than a feather. Never
by failing in moral
principle fal into disgrace and bring dishonor upon your na
me.

[The second article concerns the respect due to superiors an
d consideration to be
shown inferiors. The third urges bravery and a sense of duty.
]

4. The soldier and the sailor should highly value faithfulness
and righteousness....

Faithfulness implies the keeping of one's word, and righteou
sness the fulfilment of
one's duty. If then you wish to be faithful and righteous in an

y thing, you must
careful y consider at the outset whether you can accomplish it or not. If you
thoughtlessly agree to do something that is vague in its nat ure and bind yourself to

thoughtlessly agree to do something that is vague in its nat ure and bind yourself to
unwise obligations, and then try to prove yourself faithful an d righteous, you may
find yourself in great straits from which there is no escape. … Ever since ancient
times there have been repeated instances of great men and heroes who,
overwhelmed by misfortune, have perished and left a tarnis hed name to posterity,
simply because in their effort to be faithful in smal matters they failed to discern
right and wrong with reference to fundamental principles, or because, losing sight of
the true path of public duty, they kept faith in private relatio ns. You should, then,
take serious warning by these examples.

5. The soldier and sailor should make simplicity their aim. If you do not make
simplicity your aim, you wil become effeminate and frivolou s and acquire fondness
for luxurious and extravagant ways; you wil final y grow self ish and sordid and sink
to the last degree of baseness, so that neither loyalty nor va lor wil avail to save you from the contempt of the world.

On Local Government, 1890

… According to what I have heard, discord between political parties has gradual y extended into every aspect of community life. Hardly a pers on in social, business, and economic relations, and in education, has remained unt ouched by this situation.

… There are some people who abandon what they should be doing and expend both time and effort in unproductive political debate, and some w ho, losing their sense of purpose, even run afoul of the law. These evils are spreadin g their influence, moral y, economical y, and political y, throughout the countr y. They wil impair the people's happiness and exert a harmful effect on the prospe rity of the nation. In general, if a new government, in the course of its establishm ent, is abused for reasons of personal interests, the results could be extremely harmful. They could affect the strength and the cohesion of the entire people an d become the cause of the decline of the nation. The history of our country and that of other countries provides many such examples in every age. The people, if t hey wish to prevent the growth of such evil influences, must regard at al times the unified endeavor of al as their highest aim. And the responsibility of those in a positio n to guide the people must be to apply themselves as administrators of the gover nment to this ideal.

His Majesty the Emperor has granted the constitutional syst em to his ministers

and subjects for the purpose of elevating their morals and of promoting their happiness. By virtue of this constitution ministers and subjects have been enabled to gain a higher degree of freedom and to improve their lot in life so that they can stand on an equal footing with peoples of other civilized nations. But if, unfortunately, we should err—however little—in putting this constitutional system into operation, we the people will have lost our position of honor. And thus, today, the duty of a loyal subject is to cultivate true constitutional liberty and to enjoy its benefits in peace.

If men lack self-respect and self-restraint, there cannot be freedom in its true sense. One who respects himself will of necessity respect others. One who wishes others to respect his own opinions must respect the views of others. There is no logic in the position that only one's own opinions are correct. Irrespective of place, diverse opinions are inevitable when the interests of people are not the same. Thus, we must make every effort to tolerate the views of others and to resolve differences mutually. If this is not done contention will not cease. The constitutional system is an instrument for the adjustment of diverse views: the use of force and violence will not only fail to eradicate differences in viewpoints but will also aggravate them.

Political problems do not encompass the entire field of human interests. The people who might entertain different political views very fre

quently hold mutual y
identical views in religious and moral matters, and in matter
s of personal and social
relations. It is not the way of a loyal, trustworthy man to set
aside his religious,
moral, personal, and social relationships in the sole interest
of politics. Thus, to
promote party rivalry to extremes is a human misfortune. N
ay, to resort to violence
and to use obstructionist methods against an opponent to pr
omote one's political
position is to permit personal passions to enslave him. It is a
gainst the principle of
the observance of the law. It is against the spirit of the const
itutional system.

It is especial y undesirable that one abandon his occupation
al pursuit for the sake
of a political cause. It is against his own interest as wel as t
hat of society as a
whole. The economic strength of a country is dependent mai
nly on productive labor.

Thus, it is not the way of the good citizen to indulge in needl
ess arguments to the
neglect of his cal ing. Not only wil he thus fail to add his bit
to the national wealth
but he wil also fail to induce others to develop industrious h
abits of self-reliance.

On Political Parties, 1917 (Repeating an 1898 Essay)
The parties seem smugly unconcerned over the danger to o
ur country of having to
stand alone and without support in the future among the po
wers of the world. The
evils of partisan politics are indeed deplorable. If this trend i

s permitted to develop
unchecked, I fear that the spirit of the Meiji Restoration wil die and the splendid
achievements of the late emperor wil soon come to naught. The actual situation
with respect to political parties in our country today indicate s that when one party
is excessively strong in Parliament, that party becomes reckl ess and arbitrary. When
two parties are evenly matched, the struggle between them becomes extremely
violent. Thus, to eliminate arbitrary actions and violent politi cal struggles, it would
seem advisable to divide their strength and to have them re strain each other
mutual y. I have faith in a plan to establish a three-
party system in the Diet which
would eliminate excesses and help foster moderation. If the third party is organized
by men who are impartial and moderate, and possessed of i ntel igence and a sincere concern for the wel -
being of the country, it is my belief that it can make a
contribution to the state toward the achievement of constitu tional government, and
it wil set an example to others. … We must organize a grou p consisting of fair and
intel igent men who wil stand between the two existing part ies and be partial to
neither; who can check party excesses and irregularities; wh o can restrain the
ambitions of those who seek to satisfy their avarice or their desire for political
power through the instrument of the party; who can transce nd the common run of
politicians for whom politics is a means of livelihood; and wh o can go forward,

resolutely and firmly, with but the one thought in mind of se rvice to the state. Only
by the conduct of a central core of such men who would not be corrupted by
thoughts of personal gain or fame, and only by having as a nucleus in the Diet men
who would not falter in their public devotion, can the secret of true constitutional government be achieved.

The greater the number of such representatives we can gat her, the better it wil
be. However, the number of such men, both economical y e stablished and
patriotical y inclined, need not be numerous. ... There must be several mil ion
among our population of seventy mil ion who have fixed pro perty and are
economical y secure, and who therefore are above corruptio n. If such men come
forward to organize a solid nucleus in the Diet, the empire w il be on a firm and
secure foundation, and there need be no anxiety in the coun try....

CHAPTER 26

BUSINESS VALUES IN THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Western Europe and Japan

This chapter explores the similarities and differences betwe en the ideas and
motivations of businessmen in two of the key industrial area s of the long nineteenth century: Western Europe and Japan.

Comparing business values in Japan and Western Europe off ers two angles, both

central to world history from the nineteenth century onward. First is the question of what kind of business culture links to successful industrialization; the West displayed a highly functional set of business values, but so ultimately did Japan in a somewhat different fashion. Comparison helps expand our understanding of the two industrial approaches and, potentially, sets a basis for considering industrial cultures more generally. The second point involves what by the later twentieth century was being referred to as the development of a global middle class, as part of the globalization process more generally. For Japan, the later nineteenth century was the time when the key adjustments to globalization occurred. Comparing Japan and the West offers suggestions about the expansion of middle-class values ultimately on a global scale.

The industrial revolution was one of the fundamental developments of modern world history, introducing powerful new technology to most branches of production, transportation, and communication, while propeling manufacturing ahead of agriculture as a source of jobs and wealth.

Amid all the facets of industrialization, the role of the business community was a crucial ingredient and an important result. Industrialization everywhere depended on business initiatives in the nineteenth century, but it also depended on new business attitudes. More traditional merchants, in places like Western Europe and

Japan, did not welcome the innovations that came with industrialization. They found industrial technology messy and industrial investment too risky. They viewed industrial entrepreneurs as grubby upstarts—at least until success brought great wealth.

Yet there were new values and motivations available. In Western Europe, the Enlightenment helped provide a new belief in the value of work and the validity of increasing wealth. The same ideas of progress that could inspire political or scientific revolution could justify new economic initiatives. In some cases, Enlightenment ideals combined with religious interests to produce businessmen eager to demonstrate God's grace through economic success.

By the early nineteenth century many spokespeople proclaimed the virtues of social mobility and the acquisition of wealth. Self-help manuals urged hard work, thrift, and daring as the keys to legitimate business success. And businessmen themselves periodically wrote tracts or memoirs extoling similar values, which they viewed as fundamental to their own success and the good of society at large.

The new attributes associated with business innovation could be challenging to many societies outside the West. Japan was a case in point, after the Meiji era began under western pressure in 1868. Though Japan had a substa

ntial merchant tradition,
there were fewer preindustrial businessmen and less busine ss wealth than had
existed in the West. Japan had not experienced the scientific revolution or the
Enlightenment. During the seventeenth and eighteenth cent uries the hold of

Enlightenment. During the seventeenth and eighteenth cent uries the hold of Confucianism had increased.

In this setting Japan developed a complex combination of im itation and
adaptation, which would al ow industrial development to me sh with established
values. Businessmen and Confucian leaders alike wrestled w ith the problems of
defining appropriate goals, and on the whole outright wester nization was rejected.

Government played a greater direct role in Japan’s industrial ization than had been
the case in countries like Britain and France. A Ministry of In dustry, set up in 1881,
sponsored technological innovation, directly subsidized indiv idual business leaders,
and ran many operations in heavy industry directly. But Japa n did experience a
surge of new business leadership and social mobility. Talente d former peasants
generated most factory operations in textiles. A large middl e-class sector developed around them.

Comparison with the West contributes to our understanding of why Japan was
poised for rapid economic change, why it could create its ow

n version of an
energetic business class. Western and Japanese business se
ctors continue to interact
and to differ. Distinctive approaches to middle-
class goals, emerging in the early
industrial periods, continue to matter in the two leading regi
ons of industrialization today.

The fol owing selections are from the writings of a British pu
blicist and a
Japanese reformer and from the accounts of actual industrial
ists in France and Japan.

Questions

1. What did Samuel Smiles mean by self-help? How did he compare the roles of business and of education in preparing the individual? What attitudes did he imply toward workers who did not manage to rise?

2. What, according to Smiles, were the rewards for work?

3. Did Narcisse Faucheur—a businessman, not a writer—show the same values that Smiles preached so widely? What were his main motivations? How did he define success? What kinds of attitudes toward his workers and toward society at large did Faucheur seem to have?

4. What is the nature of the individualism preached and practiced by members of the Western middle class in the nineteenth century?

5. How did Fukuzawa define and defend individualism? How did Shibuzawa's goals differ from Fukuzawa's prescriptions?

6. How did Confucianism affect definitions of business entrepreneurship in late-nineteenth-century Japan?

7. How did nationalism help justify business in Meiji Japan? Did early Western industrialists invoke nationalism in the same way? What might account for differences here?

8. How did Faucheur and Shibuzawa describe their own work values?

9. How would Faucheur react to Shibuzawa's statement of m
otives? How would
Shibuzawa critique Smiles's basic approach to success?

10. What were the most important similarities between the r
oles and ideas of Japanese and Western business leaders?

For Further Discussion

1. How could two different sets of business values work equ
al y wel in under-
girding industrialization and the rise of a new middle class?

2. How might Western and Japanese middle-
class values lead to different attitudes
toward the role of government in industry? How might they l
ead to different
attitudes toward workers and worker organizations? Would t
he attitudes produce
different reactions to aggressive worker unions and strikes—
and which business
group would resist protest more fiercely?

3. Were Japanese business values and political conservatism
 (chapter 23) opposed to
each other, or did they blend together in creating a distincti
ve approach to modern society?

4. Did Western and Japanese business styles relate at al to
earlier definitions of
feudalism, in which the two regions had also overlapped and
 yet diverged (see chapter 8)?

5. How do different traditions of business goals continue to
distinguish Japanese
economic organization and behavior from their Western cou
nterparts? Why do

some Western leaders argue that certain Japanese emphases should now be imitated elsewhere?

BUSINESS IDEALS IN BRITAIN: SAMUEL SMILES

Samuel Smiles was the leading spokesperson for middle-class values of work and mobility in mid-nineteenth-century Britain. A small-town doctor, Smiles early turned to writing as his main source of income. His books, notably the classic Self-Help (first published in 1859), went through many editions, until interest in this up-by-the-bootstraps approach declined as business organization became more complex after 1870. Many artisans and shopkeepers read Smiles, seeking clues that would improve their own fortune. We cannot know how many people agreed with Smiles's preachments, but the evidence suggests widespread interest. Interpreting Smiles and the many similar authors throughout the early industrial West is not a totally straightforward task, for though the value system was not complex, it was new, a departure from more traditional Western social measurements.

• • •

The spirit of self-help, as exhibited in the energetic action of individuals, has in all times been a marked feature in the English character, and furnishes the true measure of our power as a nation. Rising above the heads of the mass there were always to

be found a series of individuals distinguished beyond others, who commanded the public homage. But our progress has also been owing to multitudes of smaller and less known men. Though only the generals' names may be remembered in the history of any great campaign, it has been in a great measure through the individual valour and heroism of the privates that victories have been won. … Even the humblest person, who sets before his fellows an example of industry, sobriety, and upright honesty of purpose in life, has a present as well as a future influence upon the well-

being of his country; for his life and character pass unconsciously into the lives of others, and propagate good example for all time to come.

Daily experience shows that it is energetic individualism which produces the most powerful effects upon the life and action of others, and really constitutes the best practical education. Schools, academies, and colleges, give but the merest beginnings of culture in comparison with it. Far more influential is the life-education daily given in our homes, in the streets, behind counters, in workshops, at the loom and

given in our homes, in the streets, behind counters, in workshops, at the loom and the plough, in counting-houses and manufactories, and in the busy haunts of men.

This is that finishing instruction as members of society, …—all that tends to

discipline a man truly, and fit him for the proper performanc
e of the duties and business of life,—
a kind of education not to be learnt from books, or acquired
by any amount of mere literary training....

From Samuel Smiles, Self-Help (London, 1859), 38–39, 47–
48, 115–19, 281–84.

The instances of men, in this and other countries, who, by di
nt of persevering
application and energy, have raised themselves from the hu
mblest ranks of industry
to eminent positions of usefulness and influence in society,
are indeed so numerous
that they have long ceased to be regarded as exceptional. L
ooking at some of the
more remarkable, it might almost be said that early encount
er with difficulty and
adverse circumstances was the necessary and indispensabl
e condition of success....

[Many of our leaders are partly proud] to think that a person
 risen from that
condition [of child labor in the factories] should be able to si
t side by side, on equal
terms, with the hereditary gentry of the land....

Fortune has often been blamed for her blindness; but fortun
e is not so blind as men
are. Those who look into practical life wil find that fortune is
 usual y on the side of
the industrious, as the winds and waves are on the side of t
he best navigators. In the
pursuit of even the highest branches of human inquiry the c
ommoner qualities are found the most useful—
such as common sense, attention, application, and

perseverance. Genius may not be necessary, though even g
enius of the highest sort
does not disdain the use of these ordinary qualities. The ver
y greatest men have been
among the least believers in the power of genius, and as wo
rldly wise and
persevering as successful men of the commoner sort. Some
have even defined genius
to be only common sense intensified… owing their success i
n a great measure, to
their indefatigable industry and application….

Hence, a great point to be aimed at is to get the working qu
ality wel trained.

When that is done, the race wil be found comparatively eas
y. We must repeat and
again repeat; facility wil come with labour. Not even the sim
plest art can be
accomplished without it; and what difficulties it is found cap
able of achieving: It
was by early discipline and repetition that the late Sir Robert
 Peel [British politician,
son of a businessman] cultivated those remarkable, though
stil mediocre powers,
which rendered him so il ustrious an ornament of the British
Senate. When a boy at
Drayton Manor, his father was accustomed to set him up at
table to practise
speaking ex tempore; and he early accustomed him to repe
at as much of the
Sunday’s sermon as he could remember. Little progress was
made at first, but by
steady perseverance the habit of attention became powerful
, and the sermon was at
length repeated almost verbatim. When afterwards replying

in succession to the
arguments of his parliamentary opponents—
an art in which he was perhaps unrival ed—
it was little surmised that the extraordinary power of accura te
remembrance which he displayed on such occasions had be en original y trained
under the discipline of his father in the parish church of Dra yton.

It is indeed marvel ous what continuous application wil effe ct in the commonest of things....

To wait patiently, however, men must work cheerful y. Cheer fulness is an
excel ent working quality, imparting great elasticity to the c haracter. As a bishop has said, 'Temper is nine-
tenths of Christianity'; so are cheerfulness and diligence nine-
tenths of practical wisdom. They are the life and soul of succ ess, as wel as of
happiness: perhaps the very highest pleasure in life consisti ng in clear, brisk,

happiness: perhaps the very highest pleasure in life consisti ng in clear, brisk,
conscious working; energy, confidence, and every other goo d quality mainly depending upon it....

How a man uses money—makes it, saves it, and spends it— is perhaps one of the best
tests of practical wisdom. Although money ought by no mea ns to be regarded as a
chief end of man's life, neither is it a trifling matter, to be he ld in philosophic
contempt, representing as it does to so large an extent the

means of physical comfort and social wel -
being. Indeed, some of the finest qualities of human nature are
intimately related to the right use of money; such as genero sity, honesty, justice, and self-
sacrifice; as wel as the practical virtues of economy and pro vidence. On the
other hand, there are their counterparts of avarice, fraud, inj ustice, and selfishness,
as displayed by the inordinate lovers of gain; and the vices of thriftlessness,
extravagance, and improvidence, on the part of those who misuse and abuse the means entrusted to them....

Comfort in worldly circumstances is a condition which every man is justified in
striving to attain by al worthy means. ... The very effort req uired to be made to
succeed in life with this object is of itself an education; stim ulating a man's sense of self-
respect, bringing out his practical qualities, and disciplining him in the exercise
of patience, perseverance, and such like virtues. The provid ent and careful man must
necessarily be a thoughtful man, for he lives not merely in t he present, but with
provident forecast makes arrangements for the future. He m ust also be a temperate man, and exercise the virtue of self-denial, than which nothing is so much calculated
to give strength to the character....

Hence the lesson of self-denial—
the sacrificing of a present gratification for a future good—
is one of the last that is learnt. Those classes which work th e hardest
might natural y be expected to value the most the money w

hich they earn. Yet the
readiness with which so many are accustomed to eat up and drink up their earnings
as they go renders them to a great extent helpless and depe ndent upon the frugal.

There are large numbers of persons among us who, though enjoying sufficient means
of comfort and independence, are often found to be barely a day’s march ahead of
actual want when a time of pressure occurs; and hence a gr eat cause of social helplessness and suffering….

… That there should be a class of men who live by their dail y labour in every
state is the ordinance of God, and doubtless is a wise and ri ghteous one; but that this
class should be otherwise than frugal, contented, intel igent, and happy is not the
design of Providence, but springs solely from the weakness, self-indulgence, and
perverseness of man himself. The healthy spirit of self-help created amongst working
people would more than any other measure serve to raise th em as a class, and this,
not by pul ing down others, but by level ing them up to a hig her and stil advancing
standard of religion, intel igence, and virtue.

A F RENCH BUSINESSMAN: NARCISSE FAUCHEUR

Narcisse Faucheur set up a textile factory from the 1820s on ward, the early decades
of French industrialization. He was not an industrial giant bu t a fairly average industrialist—
the sort that real y helped industrial firms to spread after so

meone else
took a lead. Faucheur notes his dependence on British techn ological innovations, for
example, which he simply imported. He was from a rather tr aditional smal
merchant family, whose habits he both utilized and transcen ded as he moved into
the modern business context. He wrote an autobiography re viewing his career,
printed in the 1880s in a limited edition for his children and grandchildren. His

printed in the 1880s in a limited edition for his children and grandchildren. His discussion of his activities and his self-elevation provide solid clues about his basic
ideas and motivations, though he never spel s these matter s out directly.

• • •

… The idea of leaving for America again struck my fancy, bu t my parents were
absolutely opposed to it. I yielded to their wishes rather tha n cause them the least
unhappiness.… Final y, after a long and very arduous search , our friend announced
that he had found a position for me with the most important wholesalers in Clermont.…

The friend whom I mentioned in the last chapter had found an opening for me in the firm of M. Cassan-
Guyot, who was a wholesale dealer in [cloth] products.… Thi s
firm was, without doubt, the most important in Clermont. Un fortunately, I received
a very meager salary, and because I was living with my pare

nts I gave my mother al
my earnings to help with the household expenses, which ha d risen sharply upon my
arrival. I had rather quickly observed how poor my unfortun ate parents were, so it
was with real joy that at the end of each month I placed into my mother’s hands the paltry sum I had earned.…

I soon saw, therefore, that it would be necessary for me to fi nd another source of
income in order to maintain a modest but always neat and p roper wardrobe.…

When I became a travel ing salesman for M. Delcros, I had t he opportunity to talk
with many other merchants and salesmen in Lil e. They spok e of it as a city with a
great commercial future and as an area ful of opportunities for a young man such
as I to establish himself by his own efforts. I was taken with the idea because I was
already preoccupied with plans for the future. I wrote to my brother about it, and he
encouraged me to transfer to Lil e, not only because we wou ld have the pleasure of
seeing each other often, but also because it would be a step toward the realization of my goals.

From Narcisse Faucheur, Mon histoire à mes chers enfants et petit enfants (Paris,
1886), quoted in Peter N. Stearns, ed., The Impact of the Ind ustrial Revolution (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-
Hal , 1972), 105–12. Reprinted by permission of the author.

Although I was wel liked by my employer, the firm offered me no prospects of a

partnership. It didn’t have enough capital to expand its operations to the point that I might one day acquire a financial interest in it. I was condemned, therefore, to grow old as a salesman and to devote all my energies to [working for] other people....

My lace business prospered for several years, but gradually a new product began to hurt it. I am speaking of tulle, which replaced lace and was much cheaper. The designs on the tulle, all of which was imported, were nearly all in very bad taste. I thought that if I embroidered on the tulle some attractive French designs, I could sell it easily and make a large profit.

I went to England to learn about this industry and to see if I could bring it into France. I took from England all the information I needed, but I decided against buying the looms used to make plain tulle, for they were too expensive and their purchase would have used funds which I needed in my other commercial ventures.

Therefore, I concentrated on information dealing with embroidering tulle, an operation I hoped to start in France. I returned to Lille with some detailed designs and some patterns by which one could determine the number of stitches each design required. Since tulle embroidery work was paid according to the number of stitches in a design, these patterns made it easy for me to determine labor costs and set the

in a design, these patterns made it easy for me to determin e labor costs and set the final price.

In Saint-
Armand I was in contact with two old spinsters who had two very
intel igent nieces. The nieces were very good embroiderers but they didn’t know how
to work with tul e. I showed these ladies some samples of th is embroidery and they
assured me that if a woman skil ed in the technique would g ive them some lessons,
they could easily learn to do it themselves. They also claime d that they would be
able to train many other young girls in Saint-
Armand to be embroiderers, since there
was no other occupation open to them in the region, no mat ter what their social
class. We agreed that if I put my plan into practice my works hop would be in the
home of the aunts, who would then be directors, and that th e nieces would be
foremen, al of them earning a reasonable salary.

When I was sure of being able to establish an embroidery w orkshop at Saint-
Armand on advantageous terms, I left for Paris, where I had a good designer make a
number of attractive patterns. I next arranged for an English woman from
Nottingham who was very skil ed in embroidery work to teac h the two nieces of the ladies Dutordoir.…

From the start everything succeeded according to my wishe s. In a short time I had
a factory of more than three hundred embroiderers in the D

utordoir home. The first
pieces I put up for sale gave me a profit al the more consid
erable since labor costs were very low.…

In every way possible I tried to speed up production. I was in
volved with every
detail, for the newness of the designs determined their meri
t and price. But I was
unable to rush production as much as I hoped and the scale
of my business remained limited.…

… [My sales] trips varied from twenty-
five to forty days. … But an ordinary
salesman would have certainly doubled the time, for he wou
ld not have wanted to
subject himself to al the strain that I endured. For several y
ears I had to make two
or three of these whirlwind trips, and God knows al the diffi
culty that they stirred
up for me, no matter how necessary they were!

My yearly profits did not reflect al the work I put in, but ove
r the long run my
fortune grew slowly. The market was such that one had to m
ake his decisions with
courage. The competition was intense, the profits smal , and
 one could lose al his
customers if he set his prices higher than his competitors.…

In the preceding chapters I have told you of the hard work t
o which your mother
and I diligently devoted ourselves to make our business pros
per. It is now time to
describe for you the order and thrift which guided our expen
ditures. Since our
annual profits were not very large, our budget had to be rigo

rously kept within our
income if our savings were to increase little by little....

PRAISING INDIVIDUALISM: FUKUZAWA YUKICHI

The fol owing two passages were written by a tireless Meiji westernizer. Fukuzawa (1834–
1901) visited the United States and Western Europe early, in 1860. Proud of
Japan and sometimes capable of defending Confucianism w hen he was too hard-
pressed by more conservative figures (see chapter 23), Fuku zawa on the whole stood
for change in a Western direction. Much of his work was dev oted to educational
reform, where he urged a more individualistic approach, but he also wrote on
business topics directly. His views helped stimulate debate a mong businessmen, most
of whom sought to reintroduce a more Confucian element— as the next selection

of whom sought to reintroduce a more Confucian element— as the next selection suggests.

• • •

ON EDUCATION

In my interpretation of education, I try to be guided by the l aws of nature and I try to co-
ordinate al the physical actions of human beings by the ver y simple laws of

"number and reason." In spiritual or moral training, I regard the human being as the

most sacred and responsible of al orders, unable in reason t o do anything base.

Therefore, in self-
respect, a man cannot change his sense of humanity, his jus tice, his
loyalty or anything belonging to his manhood even when dri ven by circumstances to
do so. In short, my creed is that a man should find his faith i n independence and self-respect.

From Eichi Kiyooka, trans., The Autobiography of Yukichi Fuk uzawa (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 44–
47. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

From my own observations in both Occidental and Oriental c ivilizations, I find
that each has certain strong points and weak points bound u p in its moral teachings
and scientific theories. But when I compare the two in a gen eral way as to wealth,
armament, and the greatest happiness for the greatest num ber, I have to put the
Orient below the Occident. Granted that a nation's destiny d epends upon the
education of its people, there must be some fundamental dif ferences in the education of Western and Eastern peoples.

In the education of the East, so often saturated with Confuci an teaching, I find
two things lacking; that is to say, a lack of studies in number and reason in material
culture, and a lack of the idea of independence in spiritual c ulture. But in the West I
think I see why their statesmen are successful in managing t heir national affairs, and

the businessmen in theirs, and the people general y ardent i n their patriotism and happy in their family circles.

I regret that in our country I have to acknowledge that peopl e are not formed on
these two principles, though I believe no one can escape the laws of number and
reason, nor can anyone depend on anything but the doctrin e of independence as
long as nations are to exist and mankind is to thrive. Japan c ould not assert herself
among the great nations of the world without ful recognitio n and practice of these
two principles. And I reasoned that Chinese philosophy as th e root of education was
responsible for our obvious shortcomings.

With this as the fundamental theory of education, I began a nd, though it was
impossible to institute specialized courses because of lack o f funds, I did what I
could in organizing the instructions on the principles of num ber and reason. And I
took every opportunity in public speech, in writing, and in ca sual conversations, to
advocate my doctrine of independence. Also I tried in many ways to demonstrate
the theory in my actual life. During my endeavor I came to b elieve less than ever in the old Chinese teachings.

ON BUSINESS

In the primitive, uncivilized world men could not benefit the mselves without
injuring others; therefore those who were active in mind and body and accomplished

things were always thieves. This is not so in the civilized wor ld; those who gain
riches and fame always benefit others by doing so….

Everyone in the country individual y aims at increasing his o wn private wealth. …

Everyone in the country individual y aims at increasing his o wn private wealth. …

Desiring more and stil more, they utilize al their secret skil s in the competition for
new things, and in this way new methods are evolved, land i s reclaimed and
developed, machines are invented, transportation and com munications are
improved, and the investment of capital is effected…. Privat e zeal is the source of national wealth.

A JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN'S VIEWS: SHIBUZAWA EIICHI
The fol owing selections were written by a leading business man of the Japanese
reform (Meiji) era, as industrialization was getting under wa y. Shibuzawa Ei chi (1840–
1931) ultimately presided over a hundred companies, after a period of
service in government. He was from a prosperous peasant f amily. As an industrialist
he concentrated particularly on factory textile production. H e also participated
actively in the growing debate over Western values as they applied to economic life.

• • •

FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The business world around 1873, the year when I resigned my post at the Ministry of Finance, was one fil ed with inertia. That condition is hard to imagine from the standards we hold for the business world today [1927, when Shibuzawa dictated this autobiography]. There was a tradition of respecting officials and despising common people. Al talented men looked to government services as t he ultimate goal in their lives, and ordinary students fol owed the examples set by th em. There was practical y no one who was interested in business. When pe ople met, they discussed only matters relating to the affairs of state and of the world. There was no such thing as practical business education.

It was said that the Meiji Restoration was to bring about equ ality among the four classes of people. In practice, however, those who engaged in commerce and industry were regarded as plain townspeople as before, and were despised and had to remain subservient to government officials. I knew conditi ons such as this should not be al owed to persist. A rigid class structure should not b e tolerated. We should be able to treat each other with respect and make no differe ntiation between government officials and townspeople. This was essential to our national welfare, as we looked forward to strengthening the country which requir ed wealth to back it up.

We needed commerce and industry to attain the goal of bec oming a rich nation.

Unworthy as I was, I thought of engaging in commerce and i ndustry to help promote
the prosperity of our nation. I might not have talent to beco me a good politician,
but I was confident that I could make a difference in the fiel ds of commerce and industry....

Yukichi Fukuzawa, “On Business,” trans. Fukuo Hyakawa, in Byron K. Marshal ,
Capitalism and Nationalism in Prewar Japan (Stanford, Califo .: Stanford University
Press, 1967), 33. © 1967 by the Board of Trustees of the Lel and Stanford Junior
University, renewed 1995. Al rights reserved. Used with per mission of Stanford University Press, www.sup.org.

As to the question of development of commerce and industr y, I felt that to engage
in an individual y managed shop would be going against the tide of the times, and it
was necessary for smal business firms to join their forces to gether. In other words,
they have to incorporate, and I decided to devote my energ y to this endeavor. As to
the laws governing incorporation, I thought about them whil e studying in France.

the laws governing incorporation, I thought about them whil e studying in France.

After my return from France and before my entering into gov ernment service, I
organized a chamber of commerce in Shizuoka to serve as a model for incorporation
in this country. Since that time, I have consistently advocate d the advantages of incorporation.

In organizing a company, the most important factor one oug ht to consider is to obtain the services of the right person to oversee its operati on. In the early years of Meiji, the government also encouraged incorporation of com panies and organized commercial firms and development companies. The govern ment actively participated in these companies' affairs and saw to it that th eir various needs were met ful y. However, most of these companies failed because their management was poor. To state it simply, the government failed to have the ri ght men as their managers. I had no experience in commerce and industry, b ut I also prided myself on the fact that I had greater potential for success in these f ields than most of the nongovernmental people at that time.

I also felt that it was necessary to raise the social standing o f those who engaged in commerce and industry. By way of setting an example, I b egan studying and practicing the teachings of the Analects of Confucius. It cont ains teachings first enunciated more than twenty-four hundred years ago. Yet it supplies the ultimate in practical ethics for al of us to fol ow in our daily living. It ha s many golden rules for businessmen. For example, there is a saying: "Wealth an d respect are what men desire, but unless a right way is fol owed, they cannot be ob tained; poverty and lowly position are what men despise, but unless a right way is found, one cannot leave that status once reaching it." It shows very clearly ho

w a businessman must act
in this world. Thus, when I entered the business world, I eng aged in commerce and
industry in a way consistent with the teachings of the Anale cts and practiced the
doctrine of unity of knowledge and action.

From Shibuzawa Ei chi Jijoden [Autobiography of Shiuzawa Ei chi], in Japan: A
Documentary History, ed. David J. Lu (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sh arpe, 1997) 354–56.

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FROM “MY VIEW OF LIFE”

There are in the final analysis only two types: i.e., those who consider the existence
of self objectively and those who consider it subjectively. Th e objective view regards
society first and the self second. The ego is disregarded to t he point where one
sacrifices the self for the sake of society without hesitation. The subjective view, on
the other hand, is selfishly aware of the existence of the ego in al situations and
recognizes the existence of society only secondarily. To this extent it is wil ing even
to sacrifice society for the sake of the self.…

We would end in a situation in which the appetites could onl y be satisfied by men
looting from one another. If the human heart comes to that, then the ultimate result
would be such indecent behavior as forgetting our benefact

ors, turning our backs on
our friends, and abandoning our loved ones....

FROM “INDEPENDENCE AND SELF-RELIANCE”

One must beware of the tendency of some to argue that it is
through individualism
or egoism [jiko hon’i] that the State and society can progres
s most rapidly. They
claim that under individualism, each individual competes wit
h the others, and
progress results from this competition. But this is to see mer
ely the advantages and

progress results from this competition. But this is to see mer
ely the advantages and
ignore the disadvantages, and I cannot support such a theor
y. Society exists, and a
State has been founded. Although people desire to rise to p
ositions of wealth and
honor, the social order and the tranquil ity of the State wil b
e disrupted if this is
done egoistical y. Men should not do battle in competition wi
th their fel ow men.

Therefore, I believe that in order to get along together in soc
iety and serve the State,
we must by al means abandon this idea of independence a
nd self-reliance and reject egoism completely.

From Byron K. Marshal , Capitalism and Nationalism in Prewa
r Japan (Stanford,
Califo.: Stanford University Press, 1967), 34–
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CHAPTER 27

WOMEN AND EDUCATION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The spread of education was one of the key developments i n nineteenth-century
world history. It began in the West, which already had reaso nably extensive literacy
and schooling. New political ideas, associated with the revol utionary era, pushed
leaders to think about greater access to education in order t o create opportunities
for the lower classes and to produce better-
informed (or more loyal) citizens.

Children were increasingly cherished, particularly in middle-class ideology, and this
led to the belief that they deserved the chance to learn—perhaps to learn even more
than their parents had. Industrialization prompted demands for a better-trained
workforce, able to do some arithmetic and capable of readin g factory rules and
consumer advertisements. As factories became more compl ex, child labor became less useful—
another reason to think about schooling.

Given the Western example, which seemed to demonstrate t hat modern,
widespread education was crucial to the operation of effecti ve states and to
economic growth, many societies began to fol ow suit. Japan , with a large school

system already, decreed mass education in 1872 and also b egan to replace pure
Confucianism with science and technology in the higher sch ools. Russia expanded its
schools, and reform regimes in Latin America began to do th e same.

The spread of education is already a vital topic in nineteenth -century world
history. But there’s an additional, important twist, which ma kes it a fundamental topic in women’s world history as wel .

For everywhere, the expansion of education involved wome n, despite the
widespread belief that women were intel ectual y inferior to men. Officials realized
that women might have as much use for basic reading and a rithmetic skil s as men,
if only to hold factory jobs (in the working class) or run a ho usehold (in al classes)
or raise intel igent sons. Further, women’s special roles migh t require an additional,
special kind of education, stressing domestic skil s, virtue, a nd graceful arts such as
piano playing. Some women leaders, furthermore, develope d stil other arguments,
based on claims of equal access not just to schools but also to jobs that depended on education.

Women began to catch up with men in literacy and basic skil s, at the primary
level, at least. They lagged in higher schooling, but here too, by the late nineteenth
century, a growing minority of middle-
class women began to press into American
high schools or the sex-

segregated secondary schools in France. A handful even entered universities; a few were admitted to professional sc hools in areas such as medicine.

At the same time, different regions developed different appr oaches to women's
educational issues. This was true within the West and certai nly true when other
societies, including colonies like India, are considered. It was true that the spread of
Western imperialism carried certain Western ideas about wo men to other countries.

But in many cases women were newly exploited, as colonial authorities sought
cheap labor for export industries. Many colonial women see med exotic and debased,
because of the different costumes they wore; both sexual ex ploitation and moralistic
preachments resulted, from Africa to Hawai . But where Wes tern influence was
particularly pervasive, additional signals were sometimes co nveyed.

India was an obvious case in point. Effective British economi c and military
dominance of much of the subcontinent was established in t he eighteenth century.

During the nineteenth century, the British imposed ful er pol itical control. For the
most part, the British were content to leave Indian culture al one, but inevitably
some new ideas gained entrance. The British tried to outlaw the practice of suttee,
wherein some Indian wives kil ed themselves after their hus

bands had died on
grounds that there was nothing more to live for.

Other developments in India included efforts to set up new t ypes of schooling,
including some for women. The third section that fol ows, a British observer’s
assessment, deals with these changes. The result, as in Euro pe, was a confusing
pattern. Real innovation did occur: some women received an education that Indian
women had never before enjoyed. Western influences intera cted with older
traditions but also new Indian initiatives in a complex mixtur e. How did the
resultant combination compare with the complex developm ents affecting women in the West?

Questions

1. How did Necker de Saussure define appropriate education for women? How ful y did she accept the domesticity arguments? How did she ma nage to argue for additional educational goals?

2. What is the nature of Duffey's argument for women's edu cation? How does it compare with that of Necker de Saussure? Does the compari son suggest any pattern of similarities and differences in nineteenth-century situations for women in France and the United States? Do the different ideas abou t education relate to different family ideals in France and the United States?

3. How does Stanton's educational experience demonstrate the special limitations on women? How does it also demonstrate new opportunities?

4. Stanton was obviously an unusual woman, from an unusu al family: did she reflect the more standard assumptions and situations at al ? How d oes her actual educational experience compare with Duffey's arguments a bout women's education?

5. How does Stanton's experience help explain her leadershi p in American feminism?

6. What changes occurred in Indian education the later ninet eenth century? Why did the changes occur? What were the limitations on educationa l goals?

7. How did Indian educational change and constraint compare with patterns in
women's educational goals and experiences in the West?

8. How did many nineteenth-
century women in France, India, and the United States
accept and even encourage ideas and institutions that other women, at that time
and since, have found unjust? Why did these accommodations occur?

For Further Discussion

1. Why, given various prejudices against women, did women's education advance at
al in the nineteenth century? How did educational gains relate to other changes
and continuities in the lives of adult women—
did education change more or less
than other aspects of life?

2. Considering education and family trends, do France and the United States fal
within a common Western pattern with regard to nineteenth-
century women, or
do the differences suggest that the United States was a distinctive civilization?

3. Is westernization a useful concept in describing educational changes for upper-
caste women in India? Or were special Indian features stil predominant even amid change?

4. How do educational changes and ideas about women's education help explain the
rise of feminism in the nineteenth century? Why was feminism stronger in the

United States than in France, and in the West general y, tha n in India?

5. How have twentieth-
century women’s patterns in the West and in India altered nineteenth-
century developments? To what extent do they stil reflect ni neteenth-century issues?

FRANCE

This selection was written in 1838 by Albertine-
Adrienne Necker de Saussure. Necker
de Saussure was a Protestant of Swiss origin, but she was wi
dely known in France.

She had earlier written on more general educational issues.
Her later book, from
which this passage is taken, argued for a domestic educatio
n, granting women's
special roles in marriage while pushing for a wider education
al range.

From Albertine-
Adrienne Necker de Saussure, The Study of the Life of Woma
n (Philadelphia, 1844), 27–29, 71, 74–75.

• • •

The same gospel which says "Women, submit yourselves to
your own husbands,"

teaches [them] also that there is no inequality among huma
n beings in the sight of
God. "Ye are al the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ."
"There is neither bond
nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are al one
in Christ Jesus."

But this part of our celestial nature which education should
constantly seek to
bring out, man has scarcely taken into account. He has had
this life only in view,
and has shut his eyes upon whatever limited his rights here.
 He has seen only the wife in the woman—

in the young girl only the future wife. Al the faculties, the qualities which have no immediate relation to his interests, have seemed to him worthless. Yet there are many of the gifts bestowed upon woman that have no relation to the state of a wife. This state, although natural, is not necessary—perhaps half the women who now exist, have not been, or are no longer, married. In the indigent classes, the girl who is able to maintain herself, quits her parents, and supports herself by her industry for a long time, perhaps for life, without requiring aid from man. No social arrangements oblige her to become dependent. It is therefore important, that education should unfold in the young girl the qualities which give the surest promise of wisdom, happiness, usefulness, and dignity, whatever may be her lot....

If we would have the selfishness of men plainly exhibited, let us listen to Rousseau.

"Al the education of women should bear a relation to men—to please, to be useful to them—to possess their love and esteem, to educate them in childhood, to nurse them when grown up, to counsel, to console, to make their lives pleasant and sweet; such are the duties of women and should be taught to them from infancy."

If Rousseau had said that the education of women should bear a relation to what surrounds them, to the beings with whom nature or love had entwined their fate, we

would applaud this language. Why particularly designate me
n? Why teach young
girls to consider their own sex as nothing? and why give to t
he necessity of loving

girls to consider their own sex as nothing? and why give to t
he necessity of loving the most dangerous tendency?…

… Sisters brought up with their brothers would be subject to
 the same rules and
duties, justice and truth being the only means employed to
guide them. In this
common education, there must be more firmness, less flatte
ry; the promises and
menaces of opinion, to which boys are comparatively insens
ible, are rarely
employed. The motives proposed to al the children are thos
e of goodness, reason,
and true moral philosophy, adapted to their comprehension.

Since the comparative weakness of girls is rarely manifested
 before the age of ten
years, why should they be freed from the laws of natural eq
uality? Why led to
calculate upon accommodations and consideration from the
other sex? Many sad
disappointments are thus prepared for them.…

Obedience is so important an element in education, it is so t
ruly the first duty of
childhood, and the way to observe every other, that in this r
espect no difference can
be made in the education of the two sexes. However, docilit
y, that internal
disposition which natural y leads to the fulfil ment of this dut
y, may wel be the

object of peculiar cultivation in young girls. Whenever boys are placed under public instruction, they are rather governed by general rules than by the wil of individuals.

Women, on the contrary, are cal ed to bear, very often, and perhaps throughout their lives, the yoke of personal obedience. Since such is their fat e, it is wel to accustom them to it; they must learn to yield without even an internal murmur. Their gayety, their health, their equality of temper, wil al gain by a prom pt and cordial docility.

...

Hence we would exhort mothers always to exercise fearlessl y the authority with which God has entrusted them, since this also is sacred auth ority. Even though they might obtain the accomplishment of their plans in some oth er way, it would be important to accustom their daughters to submission. We w ould suggest that long expositions of motives invite objections, and seem to show t hat resistance is expected. It is with little girls especial y that it is important t o prevent rejoinders, the habit of contradicting and of arguing on al occasions....

In cherishing this sentiment you wil also cultivate in your da ughter other qualities: you wil endow her with patience, resignation, and al the gentle virtues that a woman is infal ibly cal ed to exercise. To the caprices of fortune wil be

added, for her discipline, those of mankind. A multitude of il usive hopes and
disappointed expectations form a part of her fate. Her best plans wil be overturned:
her occupations interrupted, she wil have to suffer in silenc e humiliations and
distresses stil more poignant. But when, gentle and patient, she shal have supported
al such trials, a high degree of virtue wil be developed with in her.

[Here is Necker de Saussure’s schedule for organizing the ho urs in a young girl’s day.]

Religious duties: worship and various exercises, 1

Literary and scientific studies—
intel ectual cultivation: elements of calculation
and physical science, languages, history and geography, ex ercises of memory, 4

[total]

Fine arts: music and drawing, 1.5

Material duties and occupations: physical exercise, 1.5; fem ale work and domestic
care, 1.5; liberty, meals, and family circle, 4.5

On looking over the above plan, we see at once that the larg er portion of the time

On looking over the above plan, we see at once that the larg er portion of the time
is appropriated to recreations or duties purely material, and the smal er portion to
study. It seems to us, therefore, that we cannot be accused

of requiring too much
mental application from young girls. But we can never appro ve of any diminution of
the time claimed for purely intel ectual education. If, then, w e wish to preserve
intact the four previous hours employed to develop the mag nificent gift of
intel igence, it is essential to lose not a moment; long prepa rations, idle words, must
be prohibited, and this alone would be a valuable habit. The power of promptly
fixing the attention forms what is cal ed presence of mind, a nd also gives nerve to the character.…

THE UNITED STATES

The fol owing two selections come from a proponent not onl y of women's education
but also of coeducation, Eliza Duffey (d. 1898), and from the reminiscences of the tireless nineteenth-
century feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–
1902). Duffey,
writing in 1874, argued vigorously against limitations on wo men. Her work was part
of the growing movement for more rounded education, inclu ding higher education and exercise—
a movement that produced a growing number of women's c ol eges; it
also resulted in women's gradual entry into high schools and coeducational col eges.

Stanton, who married and had several children, was one of t he distinctive personalities of nineteenth-
century American history and a person of tremendous
energy and persistence. By the late nineteenth century, alo ng with a few other

leaders, she helped shape the movement that would soon le ad to the granting of the
vote to women (in 1920; women’s suffrage in France did not arrive until 1945).

• • •

ELIZA DUFFEY

As infancy begins to give place to childhood, then the distin ctive training
commences in earnest. The boy is al owed to be natural, the girl is forced to be
artificial. Some girls break through al restraints and romp, b ut they are not the
model girls whom mothers delight in and visitors praise for being “lady-like.” Boy
and girl as they are, with the same life pulsing in their veins and drawing its
sustenance in precisely the same manner, with the same ph ysical and mental needs,
nature cal s imperatively for an equal y active life for both. T hey both want the air
and the sunshine. They need equal y to be hardened by the storms, tanned by the
winds and have limbs strengthened by unrestrained exercis e. But instead of this
equality, while boys have their liberty more or less freely gr anted them, girls must
stay at home and sew and read, and play prettily and quietl y, and take demure
walks. I am not speaking of girls in a single stratum of societ y, but of girls
everywhere, from the highest down almost to the lowest, wh erever the word “lady”

is sufficiently reverenced and misunderstood....

From Eliza Duffey, No Sex in Education; or, An Equal Chance for Both Girls and
Boys (Philadelphia, 1874), 40, 43, 100, 101.

Girls, whose energies are stil the most powerful, have no op portunity for working
off their surplus vitality in rude and boisterous ways, for the restraint is never lifted
from them. So they enter with the whole force of their natur es into their studies,
and, as every teacher wil bear testimony, soon far outstrip t heir brothers. To be at
the head of their class, to receive the highest mark of merit, is their ruling ambition.

Their minds are prematurely developed at the expense of th eir bodies. This does not
result because they are educated as boys, but because both are educated wrongly,

result because they are educated as boys, but because both are educated wrongly,
and the girl far more wrongly than the boy, inasmuch and ju st so far as her
education in the general discipline of her life differs from tha t of the boy....

When we stil further admit that in matters of fresh air, exer cise and dress girls
almost invariably labor under disadvantages which boys do not feel, I think there
has been sufficient admitted to account for al failures (supp osing there to be any)
of girls in keeping healthful as wel as mental pace with boy

s. It is pernicious habits
in these respects which need looking after and correcting—these and the further and
to my mind stil more important fact that at the close of her school-days is removed
a girl’s mental stimulus, and she is left to col apse. Set thes e things right, and let
girls find a “career” open to them, and education wil take c are of itself.

If there is real y a radical mental difference in men and wom en founded upon sex,
you cannot educate them alike, however much you try. If wo men cannot study
unremittingly, why then they wil not, and you cannot make them. But because they
do, because they choose so to do, because they wil do so in spite of you, should be
accepted as evidence that they can, and, al other things bei ng equal, can with
impunity. Instead of our race dying out through these wome n, they are the hope of the country—
the women with broad chests, large limbs and ful veins, per fect
muscular and digestive systems and harmonious sexual org ans, who wil keep pace
with men either in a foot or an intel ectual race, who know p erfectly their own
powers and are not afraid to tax them to their utmost, knowi ng as they do that
action generates force. These are the mothers of the coming race. … The result wil be truly “the survival of the fittest.”

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

When I was eleven years old, two events occurred which cha nged considerably the
current of my life. My only brother, who had just graduated f rom Union Col ege,
came home to die. A young man of great talent and promise , he was the pride of my
father’s heart. We early felt that this son fil ed a larger place in our father’s
affections and future plans than the five daughters together. Wel do I remember
how tenderly he watched my brother in his last il ness, the s ighs and tears he gave
vent to as he slowly walked up and down the hal , and, whe n the last sad moment
came, and we were al assembled to say farewel in the sile nt chamber of death, how
broken were his utterances as he knelt and prayed for comf ort and support. … As he
took no notice of me, after standing a long while, I climbed u pon his knee, when he
mechanical y put his arm about me and, with my head resti ng against his beating
heart, we both sat in silence, he thinking of the wreck of al his hopes in the loss of a
dear son, and I wondering what could be said or done to fil the void in his breast.

At length he heaved a deep sigh and said: “Oh, my daughter , I wish you were a boy!”

Throwing my arms about his neck, I replied: “I wil try to be al my brother was.”

From Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Eighty Years and More: Remini scence, 1815–1897

(Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993), 10–23.

Then and there I resolved that I would not give so much tim e as heretofore to
play, but would study and strive to be at the head of al my classes and thus delight
my father’s heart. Al that day and far into the night I ponde red the problem of
boyhood. I thought that the chief thing to be done in order t o equal boys was to be
learned and courageous. So I decided to study Greek and le arn to manage a horse.

Having formed this conclusion I fel asleep. My resolutions, u nlike many such made
at night, did not vanish with the coming light. I arose early a nd hastened to put
them into execution. They were resolutions never to be forg otten—destined to mold

them into execution. They were resolutions never to be forg otten—destined to mold
my character anew. As soon as I was dressed I hastened to our good pastor, Rev.

Simon Hosack, who was always early at work in his garden.

“Doctor,” said I, “which do you like best, boys or girls?”

“Why, girls, to be sure; I would not give you for al the boys i n Christendom.”

“My father,” I replied, “prefers boys; he wishes I was one, an d I intend to be as
near like one as possible. I am going to ride on horseback an d study Greek. Wil you

give me a Greek lesson now, doctor? I want to begin at once .”

“Yes, child,” said he, throwing down his hoe, “come into my l ibrary and we wil begin without delay.”…

During al this time I kept up my lessons at the parsonage a nd made rapid
progress. I surprised even my teacher, who thought me cap able of doing anything. I
learned to drive, and to leap a fence and ditch on horseback . I taxed every power,
hoping some day to hear my father say: “Wel , a girl is as go od as a boy, after al .”

But he never said it. When the doctor came over to spend th e evening with us, I
would whisper in his ear: “Tel my father how fast I get on,” and he would tel him,
and was lavish in his praises. But my father only paced the r oom, sighed, and
showed that he wished I were a boy; and I, not knowing why he felt thus, would
hide my tears of vexation on the doctor’s shoulder.

Soon after this I began to study Latin, Greek, and mathemati cs with a class of
boys in the Academy, many of whom were much older than I . For three years one
boy kept his place at the head of the class, and I always sto od next. Two prizes were
offered in Greek. I strove for one and took the second. How wel I remember my joy
in receiving that prize. There was no sentiment of ambition, rivalry, or triumph over
my companions, nor feeling of satisfaction in receiving this

honor in the presence of
those assembled on the day of the exhibition. One thought a lone fil ed my mind.

“Now,” said I, “my father wil be satisfied with me.” So, as s oon as we were
dismissed, I ran down the hil , rushed breathless into his offi ce, laid the new Greek
Testament, which was my prize, on his table and exclaimed: “There, I got it!” He
took up the book, asked me some questions about the class, the teachers, the
spectators, and, evidently pleased, handed it back to me. Th en, while I stood looking
and waiting for him to say something which would show that he recognized the
equality of the daughter with the son, he kissed me on the f orehead and exclaimed,
with a sigh, “Ah, you should have been a boy!”

INDIA

The fol owing selection, written around 1905, comes from a book by a British
educational authority from a women’s col ege in Oxford Univ ersity, Minna G.

Cowan. The report raises obvious questions about possible b ias: what other kinds of
data would help in assessing educational developments in In dia during the period?

How did the directions of change, and the levels of female e ducational access,
compare to Western patterns? Why did any change occur at al ?

• • •

The Calcutta School Society ascertained in 1818 that no pro vision of any kind
existed for the education of women, and an attempted esti mate of their general
literacy places the figure at one in a hundred thousand. The old ideal had so utterly
vanished, that it needed the touch of Western civilization to revive even the
conception of its former existence. This existence, shadowy and faint though it may
appear in our eyes, is an enormous asset to the new movem ent in a country where

appear in our eyes, is an enormous asset to the new movem ent in a country where
everything Aryan and Vedic counts for much in the endeavo r to create a national consciousness.

The modern epoch is thus in part a Renaissance, in part the introduction once
more of the ideal of another faith. It wil occupy our attentio n in detail and fal s
natural y into three periods. The first dates from 1819, when the Baptist Mission in
Calcutta started its first school for girls til 1854, during whic h time the influence
was almost entirely that of the women missionaries; the sec ond, from the famous
Educational Despatch of 1854 til 1884, is characterized by t he [colonial]

Government policy of “grants-in-
aid” to voluntary associations, by the first tentative
beginnings of direct Government effort, and by the expansio n of Secondary
education under missionary auspices; in the modern period dating from the
presentation of the report of Sir Wil iam Hunter’s Commissio n in 1884, the
Government share in girls’ education is much more direct, t he spontaneous Indian
element enters more strongly, and for the first time the que stion of a differentiation in the curriculum arises.…

From Minna G. Cowan, The Education of Women in India (Ne w York: Fleming H.

Revel , 1912), 34–35, 36–37, 38–41, 44–45, 47–50, 51–52, 53.

The education given by the women missionaries consisted o f such mere rudiments
as were possible under the conditions and for the short peri od during which their

pupils were available. In 1852 a second stage of missionary education was reached
by the establishment in Calcutta of a Normal School for the t raining of Christian
female teachers under the auspices of the society known lat er as the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission.

By the great educational charter of 1854, the Government a dopted the policy of
fostering and encouraging private effort by a system of gran ts-in-aid to al
institutions which could comply with certain stipulations as t o buildings, number of
teachers, textbooks and type of instruction given. Religious i nstruction might be
given but did not come within the purview of the Governme nt officials. Departments
of Public Instruction were formed, Inspectors appointed, and the wel known scheme
of examinations inaugurated. It is stated in the Despatch th at female education shal
be given “frank and cordial support.”

“The importance of female education in India cannot be ove rrated, and we have
observed with pleasure the evidence which is now afforded of an increased desire on
the part of many of the natives of India to give a good educ ation to their daughters.

By these means a far greater proportional impulse is impart ed to the educational
and moral tone of the people than by the education of men. ”

The Agra experiment was the response of Government to sp ontaneous Indian
effort, and as the world of the Hindu pioneer who was its ori ginator is little known, the fol owing account may be quoted.

[From an 1860 colonial government report:] “Even in our Asi atic Provinces,
before the breaking out of the troubles, a desire had sprung up among the natives to
extend the blessings of education to women. Gopal Singh, a Hindu gentleman,
holding under Government the post of district Inspector of n ative schools, had
succeeded, through his own exertions, in establishing upwar ds of two hundred
seminaries for young ladies in the Province of Agra which we re attended by 3800

girls of the best families. By many of our countrymen in Indi a, this is regarded
rather as a social revolution than as an educational moveme nt. As a rule, the natives
look with suspicion on everything which comes from a foreig ner, for which reason
the great efforts made by the English have not produced cor responding results. ‘The

the great efforts made by the English have not produced cor responding results. ‘The
establishment of a little school,’ observes the local ruler, ‘w hich my own daughters
and those of my immediate friends and relations attend at fi rst like a charm,
dispel ed in a great measure the prejudices of my neighbour s, and induced many to
send their girls also. This example and my constant persuasi

on and reasoning have
at last succeeded in inducing many respectable inhabitants of other vil ages to yield.’

And so the movement bids fair to become national. The pupi ls are nearly al Hindus
belonging to the more respectable classes. The teachers are al men.”

The curriculum seems to have been somewhat different fro m that of the boys’

schools, and the leader notes with satisfaction: “Girls are po ssessed of better
memories and less selfishness than boys.” The success and extent of the movement
seems however to have been due to the personal influence of this one man, and with
the passing of his generation the schools degenerated in typ e. The rapid extension of
this work under Government into other districts necessitate d the employment once
more of men teachers. Four female Normal schools were est ablished which appear
to have been such only in name. Two British Inspectresses w ere appointed whose
reports indicate the same problems as those of a more mod ern date. “The vil ages
are not opposed to the school but they value them chiefly a s a means of support for
Brahmans [priests] and relatives.” They could not believe th at the Government were
in earnest on the subject, when the girls school was accom modated in a place not more attractive than a cow-
shed and the boys’ in a handsome building. In 1876, a drastic reduction of 212 schools took place and the question

of female education
dropped into abeyance for a period. The official comment th ereon was that the State
had incurred much expense in founding and maintaining the se schools and that the
results had been painful y disappointing. Historical y, the ex periment indicates the
danger of extending girls' schools beyond the desire of the c ommunity and beyond
the possibility of constant supervision on the part of British I nspectresses. The
solution of the ever present problem of a supply of teachers was only a temporary
one, and the failure of the Normal schools was attributed lar gely to the lack of a British superintendent.

The activity of Christian missions during this period seems e xtraordinary, when
the difficulties which hampered Government efforts are cons idered. Moreover, al
their educational work was handicapped, so far as numbers were concerned, by the
frank and open avowal of the desire to win their pupils ultim ately for Christianity.

The missionaries had, however, at their command the one e ssential asset—Western
women who were wil ing to give themselves heart and soul t o the work. Eight new
women's societies, both British and American, entered India between 1860 and
1870, and educational work was their most effective means of contact with the
people. Their pupils in the Primary stages were drawn both f rom the non-Christian
population and from the orphans and converts in connection

with the missions. As it
was possible to retain the Christian girls, and even some of t
he others for longer
than the usual period, owing to the exclusion of men teache
rs from the mission
schools, a Secondary system on identical lines with that for
boys began to be slowly built up.

Of the [government] aided schools there is no separate offici
al classification to
show what proportion are managed by Indian committees, a
nd what by missionary
agencies. Where possible this has been indicated from local
information in the
chapters on the separate provinces. The Indian spontaneous
element has become
however much stronger during this modern period,... while p
robably the most
remarkable feature in the Indian government is the establish
ment of girls' schools
under committees of Indian gentlemen representing differen
t faiths. This indigenous

under committees of Indian gentlemen representing differen
t faiths. This indigenous
movement is due in part to a desire to provide a good educa
tion without direct
interference with the religion of the pupils, and in part to a r
eaction from the
extreme secularism and the Westernizing influences of the
Government schools.

In spite of the recent rapid increase and the steady progress
of the last twenty
years, the percentage of girls of school age attending school

is only 4.6, and the
desire for education has stil in many places to be created.

This smal proportion indicates, apart from the social and rel igious customs
which cause it, a lack of balance in the whole system. Are th e circumstances under
which higher education is given not such as commend them selves to the Indian
mind? Or is the course of studies pursued not of sufficiently practical and
educational value to prove attractive to Indian women? Is th ere any foundation for
the popular belief that the physique of Indian girls is not stro ng enough for a prolonged school course?

The problem of the curriculum is a very subtle one. In the ea rly days of the
reform of girls' education in Great Britian, about 1862, the g reatest need seemed to
be the adoption of an adequate test of knowledge, and that test one already
recognized, so that there might seem to be no lower require ment to suit the
supposed lower capacity of the feminine mind. The same pri nciple worked in the
early days of girls' education in India and preparation for Ma triculation seemed the
only means by which the standard could be raised. Whereas in Great Britain the
leading girls' High schools have developed a flexibility and v ariety of curriculum
wherein many a "womanly woman" has found her training, e ven if she did not
prefer to seek her education in one of the numerous excel e nt private schools, the

girls’ curriculum for Indian girls has been stereotyped on ma sculine lines. If we assume that education should prepare for future life, it see ms clearly wrong that the preparation for spheres so total y different as those of Indian men and women should be identical….

PART V

The Contemporary Period, 1914–Present

THE TWENTIETH AND EARLY TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES have been so rich in events that their status as the opening of a new world history period must se em assured. Two world wars fol owed by a long Cold War (fol owed by its end, in tur n, in 1989); major revolutions in Russia, China, Mexico, and Iran and many sma l er upheavals elsewhere; the advent of the nuclear age; unprecedented po pulation growth, which, along with intensifying global industrialization, helped signifi cantly to alter the environment; the advent of airplanes, television, computers —the list seems almost endless. Of course, many centuries seem more ful of chang e at the time than they turn out to be in retrospect; but recent decades unquestiona bly claim a place at the top of any list. The problem is to sort out the main lines of d evelopment.

Several major themes defined the contemporary period, fro m World War I onward, as a new period in world history; each of the theme s carries important chal enges for comparative analysis.

First, most societies had to reconsider established political, cultural, and social systems and replace them with new alternatives. Monarchy, empire, and aristocracy al declined. Some societies indeed introduced a series of innovations. By the 1990s, few civilizations outside the West had the same political system that they had had in 1900. The end of colonialism and many revolutions required innovation. Population growth, particularly outside the industrialized centers, provided a massive prod for social, cultural and political change. Older belief systems, ranging from adherence to one of the major religions to the deeply rooted polytheism of areas such as sub-Saharan Africa, faced new rivals in movements such as nationalism and Communism and in popular cultural exports from the West. Increasing capacity for global transportation and communication, from radio to the internet, set the technological basis for dramatic new relationships.

Comparison category number one, then, involves juxtaposing the nature of change and innovation in two or more societies. Was the widespread movement toward authoritarian nationalism—cal ed fascism in its most extreme form—the same in its major European centers of power and elsewhere? How much did the leading Communist regimes have in common? How did different societies handle new activities by religious missionaries plus strong influences from Western consumer culture? How did societies with different traditions about families and conditions for

women respond to the huge surge in the population growth rate? The list of
comparative responses to common processes, in a period of great innovation, is a long one.

International contacts. This was not a brand new development, for the pattern
had been instal ed at least a thousand years before. But new levels of
communication and trade unquestionably produced a substantive change in the rates
and impacts of exchange. By the end of the century over a quarter of the world's
population might watch a single sporting event on television, World Cup soccer
heading the list. Meetings of scientists drew experts from every corner of the globe
who shared common methods and assumptions, whatever their specific cultural backgrounds—
another first in world history. Several societies, like Russia and China,
that attempted considerable isolation for part of the twentieth century, decided to
embrace greater globalization by the 1980s, mainly in the interest of greater economic prosperity.

The broad question for comparison category number two is, How did different
societies respond to the new levels of contact? What kind of international
interaction was responsible for the striking spread of political democracy at the
century's end? How, on the other hand, might some societies try to insulate
themselves from too much chal enging contact?

Third, the relative power of the West declined. This change reversed five centuries of Western ascendancy, but it showed clearly in the declining military and political dominance of the West, even with the United States included. Moscow's decolonization was a key development; so, by 2000, was rapid economic growth in East Asia, India, and elsewhere. Yet—partly because of the growing role of the United States in world affairs—Western influence remained high, and its cultural impact on other parts of the world may have exceeded developments in previous centuries. Western countries could no longer retain their colonies, but they could distribute new styles of clothing, like blue jeans; new youth music; new kinds of restaurants, like McDonald's; new films and TV shows (Baywatch became for a time the world's most widely viewed television series); scientific discoveries; and even

"international" artistic styles.

For comparative category number three, we examine the complex balance between new opportunities for global diversity, as the West's power declined, and new signs of looking to the West for models. Nationalism spread widely around the world and allowed many countries to praise distinctive features of their traditions; but the desire for national strength and respectability could lead to further borrowings from the West. Along with all the new events of this busy period, the new-

old patterns of interaction with the West constitute perhaps the most obvious sign of a time of transition to which different societies responded differently, with responses sometimes changing as the century wore on.

It was not clear, by the early twenty-first century, that any single civilization center was poised to replace the West as the dominant world civilization. Perhaps, for a time at least, there might be none. It is important to remember that the twentieth century as the opening of a new period was just that, an opening; all sorts of clarifications might follow in subsequent decades, as has been the case in world history transitions previously. In the meantime, societies outside the West, aware of lingering Western power and the siren call of claims to cultural leadership, had to make their own adjustments to continuing, sometimes novel forms of Western influence.

For, as in earlier periods of world history, novel forces elicited somewhat different responses depending on the civilization. Some societies were more open to international contacts than others. Some responded to the need for political change with democracy—India is a case in point—while others, such as China, innovated while explicitly rejecting pluralist democracy. As in previous eras, world history continued to involve comparing reactions to some common trends and impulses.

The relative decline of the West, intensifying international co ntacts, and the need to
reconsider traditional political, social, and cultural patterns a ffected virtual y al
regions; but the results varied, because of particular twentie th-century settings and
diverse prior traditions. Careful comparison remains essenti al, even among the
societies that seemed most eagerly to embrace “internation al” trends.

The chapters that fol ow tackle issues of political change by discussing both new
forms of authoritarian government and the rise of democrac y in additional areas of
the world, as wel as outright revolution. They deal with worl d power balance in

the world, as wel as outright revolution. They deal with worl d power balance in
discussing the atomic bomb and terrorism. They deal with c ultural innovations
through nationalism, changes in religious balance, and the p ressure of consumer
values. Shifts in women’s expectations and related changes in population behaviors
and policies form another vital category. In al these areas, t he mixture of
innovation with defense of older identities, the pressure of n ew global contacts, and
changes in world power balance, along with the continuing p restige of the West,
shaped the framework in which particular societies develope d patterns that can best be assessed through comparison.

CHAPTER 28

TWENTIETH-CENTURY REVOLUTIONS

The second decade of the twentieth century witnessed the early stages of three of the most important revolutions that ever occurred in world history: the Mexican, the Chinese, and the Russian. These revolutions helped set the stage for later uprisings, particularly in the 1950s–1970s decades, in various parts of Latin America, including Cuba, in Vietnam, and elsewhere. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 must be added to the list, though it had rather different bases.

Revolutions helped spur many of the key changes of the twentieth century, including the decline of monarchy and the fading of the aristocracy. They resulted in new cultural efforts, including expansion of education. They affected global politics, setting up new divisions between revolutionary and conservative powers. The tide of revolution may have ebbed by the 1990s, with the collapse of many Communist systems, but even if this proves true, revolution had been involved in many of the most important developments in contemporary world history thus far.

Revolutions obviously invite comparison. Each has a distinctive flavor and cast of characters. But revolutions also share some common dynamics and, in the twentieth century, some common causes. Comparison must also extend to impact: what were the durable political and social results in each case? What were the effects on the rest of the world?

Mexico’s revolution broke out in 1910, against the aging dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz. Various components in the revolution included liberal elements and peasant protesters. From 1920 onward, after a decade of unrest, the revolution began to consolidate a new political system. While the Mexican Revolution did not produce immediate contagion elsewhere, its example helped spur social protests later, in other parts of Latin America.

Chinese revolutionaries toppled the ancient empire in 1911–1912, aided by the presence of a boy as latest official emperor. Sun Yat-sen was the leading revolutionary spokesperson. Efforts to construct a durable new system faltered, however, amid provincial disunity and, by the 1930s, Japanese invasion. Only after World War II did a Communist regime win out, ending the explicitly revolutionary period.

Russia had a preliminary revolution in 1905, which did not, however, induce the tsar to introduce significant reforms, particularly in the political arena. The hardships of World War I combined with more basic unrest to generate a major revolution in 1917, quickly captured by Vladimir Lenin and his Bolshevik wing of the Communist party. Roughly six years of conflict followed before the Communists were able to begin consolidating their rule. Lenin’s interpretation of Marxism, and the success of the revolution, had wide impact on many other parts of the world,

through the Cold War and until the col apse of the Bolshevik regime in 1989–1891.

Questions

1. How did the goals of the Mexican and Russian Revolutions compare? What were the major similarities and differences?

2. Is Sun Yat-sen best viewed as a modem interpreter of Chinese tradition or as a revolutionary westernizer?

3. How did Sun Yat-sen's approach compare with those of revolutionaries in Mexico and Russia?

4. How did Sun Yat-sen and Lenin compare in their views of how to organize a revolution?

5. Why and how did peasant concerns loom large in twentieth-century revolutions?

6. How did the Communist approach to peasant issues compare with reform approaches in Mexico and China? What was the relationship between the Communist approach and peasant grievances and aspirations?

7. What was the interaction between political and social goals in the three revolutions?

8. Do the documents suggest any causes of the differences among the three revolutions? What other kind of material would help to deal with this issue?

For Further Discussion

1. Do these documents suggest why these three revolutions would have different
outcomes? Or why they would have different types and levels of impact in other parts of the world?

2. How do twentieth-
century revolutions, in goals, organizations, and results, compare with the Atlantic revolutions of the 1770s–
1820 period?

3. How would Western governments, including the United States, react to these three revolutions?

4. Is the contemporary age of revolution over? What has happened to the causes and
ideals of these revolutions a century later?

MEXICO

FRANCISCO MADERO: THE PLAN OF SAN LUIS POTOSI, NOVEMBER 20, 1910

Madero was a middle-class, liberal politician who took charge of the early phase of the Mexican revolution, in direct opposition to the previous, authoritarian regime of Porfirio Diaz. He issued the Plan of San Luis Potosi after Diaz stole the Mexican election of 1910 by having Madero arrested and imprisoned. Madero fled to San Antonio and issued the Plan of San Luis Potosi calling for the nullification of the elections and upon Mexicans to take up arms against the government. The date of its issue marks the beginning of the Mexican Revolution.

• • •

Peoples, in their constant efforts for the triumph of the ideal of liberty and justice, are forced, at precise historical moments, to make their greatest sacrifices.

Our beloved country has reached one of those moments. A force of tyranny which we Mexicans were not accustomed to suffer after we won our independence oppresses us in such a manner that it has become intolerable....

The legislative and judicial powers are completely subordinated to the executive, the division of powers, the sovereignty of the states, the libe

rty of the common
councils, and the rights of the citizens exist only in writing in our great charter; but,
as a fact, it may almost be said that martial law constantly exists in Mexico; the
administration of justice, instead of imparting protection to the weak, merely serves
to legalize the plunderings committed by the strong; the judges instead of being the
representatives of justice, are the agents of the executive, whose interests they

representatives of justice, are the agents of the executive, whose interests they
faithful y serve; the chambers of the union have no other wil than that of the
dictator; the governors of the States are designated by him and they in their turn
designate and impose in like manner the municipal authorities. From this it results
that the whole administrative, judicial, and legislative machinery obeys a single wil ,
the caprice of General Porfirio Diaz, who during this long administration has shown
that the principle motive that guides him is to maintain himself in power and at any cost....

In Mexico, as a democratic Republic, the public power can have no other origin
nor other basis than the wil of the people, and the latter can not be subordinated to
formulas to be executed in a fraudulent manner....

For this reason the Mexican people have protested against the il egality of the last
election and, desiring to use successively al the recourses o

ffered by the laws of the
Republic, in due form asked for the nul ification of the electi on by the Chamber of
Deputies, notwithstanding they recognized no legal origin in said body and knew
beforehand that, as its members were not the representativ es of the people, they
would carry out the wil of General Diaz, to whom exclusivel y they owe their
investiture. In such a state of affairs the people, who are the only sovereign, also
protested energetical y against the election in imposing ma nifestations in different parts of the Republic....

But such conduct was indispensable to show to the whole w orld that the Mexican
people are fit for democracy, that they are thirsty for liberty, and that their present
rulers do not measure up to their aspirations.

Besides, the attitude of the people before and during the ele ction, as wel as
afterwards, shows clearly that they reject the energy of the Government of General
Diaz and that, if those electoral rights had been respected, I would have been elected for President of the Republic.

Therefore, and in echo of the national wil , I declare the late election il egal and,
the Republic being accordingly without rulers, provisional y assume the Presidency
of the Republic until the people designate their rulers pursu ant to the law. In order
to attain this end, it is necessary to eject from power the au dacious usurpers whose

only title of legality involves a scandalous and immoral frau d.

With al honesty I declare that it would be a weakness on m y part and treason to
the people, who have placed their confidence in me, not to put myself at the front of
my fel ow citizens, who anxiously cal me from al parts of th e country, to compel
General Diaz by force of arms, to respect the national wil .

THE PLAN OF AYALA

This document was issued by the radical peasant leader Emi liano Zapata, in 1911.

Zapata never managed to seize power, but his economic de mands, and his ability to
rouse the peasantry in several key regions, affected Mexican social and political development for many decades.

• • •

[We hereby proclaim] the liberating plan of the sons of the S tate of Morelos,
affiliated with the Insurgent Army which defends the fulfil m ent of the Plan of San
Luis Potosi, with the reforms which they have believed nece ssary to add for the benefit of the Mexican Fatherland.

We, the subscribers [to this Plan], constituted in a Revolutio nary Council…

declare solemnly before the countenance of the civilized wo rld which judges us and

declare solemnly before the countenance of the civilized wo rld which judges us and
before the Nation to which we belong and love, the principle s which we have
formulated to terminate the tyranny which oppresses us and redeem the Fatherland
from the dictatorships which are imposed on us, which are d etermined in the fol owing plan:

Justicia y ley. [Justice and Law.] Ayala, 28 November, 1911. F rom Emiliano Zapata,
The Plan of Ayala (29 November, 1911), translated by Erick Langer.

1. [Accuses Francisco I. Madero, the leader of the 1910 revol ution and president of
Mexico, of betraying the revolution and al ying himself with t he oppressive old guard in the State of Morelos.]

2. Francisco I. Madero is disavowed as Chief of the Revolutio n and as President of
the Republic, for the above reasons, [and we wil] endeavor to overthrow this official.

3. The il ustrious General Pascual Orozco, second of the cau dil o Don Francisco I.

Madero, is recognized as Chief of the Liberating Revolution, and in case he does not
accept this delicate post, General Emiliano Zapata is recogni zed Chief of the Revolution.

4. The Revolutionary Junta of the Sate of Morelos manifest t he fol owing formal
points… and wil make itself the defender of the principles t hat it wil defend until victory or death.

5. The Revolutionary Junta of the State of Morelos wil not admit transactions or
political compromises until the overthrow of the dictatorial elements of Porfirio
Diaz and Francisco I. Madero, since the Nation is tired of false men and traitors who
make promises as liberators but once in power, forget them and become tyrants.

6. As an additional part of the Plan which we invoke, we assert that: the fields,
woodlands, and water which the haciendados [landlords], cientificos or bosses in
the shadow of tyranny and venal justice have usurped, wil revert to the possession
of the towns or citizens who have their corresponding titles to these properties.

[These properties] have been usurped through the bad faith of our oppressors, who
maintained al along with arms in hand the above mentioned possession. The
usurpers who feel they have the right [to ownership], wil demonstrate this before
special tribunals which wil be established when the Revolution triumphs.

7. In virtue of the fact that the immense majority of the towns and Mexican citizens
are not masters of the soil they step upon, suffering horrors of misery without being
able to better their social condition at al nor dedicate themselves to industry or
agriculture because of the monopoly in a few hands of the land, woodlands, and
waters, for this reason [the lands] wil be expropriated, with

indemnity of the third
part of these monopolies to their powerful owners, so that t
he towns and citizens of
Mexico can obtain common lands [ejidos], colonies, and legi
timate resources for
towns or agricultural fields and that above al the lack of pro
sperity and wel -being of the Mexican people is improved.

8. The haciendados, cientificos or bosses who oppose directl
y or indirectly the
present plan, wil have their possessions nationalized and tw
o thirds of what they
own wil be destined for war indemnities, [and] pensions for
the widows and
orphans of the victims who succumb in the fight for this plan
.

9. To regulate the procedures in regard to the items mention
ed above, the laws of
disentailment and nationalization wil be applied as is appro
priate. [The laws] put
into effect by the immortal Juarez regarding Church lands wil
  serve as a guide and

into effect by the immortal Juarez regarding Church lands wil
  serve as a guide and
example, which set a severe example to the despots and co
nservatives who at al
times have tried to impose the ignominious yoke of oppressi
on and backwardness.

10. The insurgent military chiefs of the Republic, who rose u
p in armed revolt at the
behest of Francisco I. Madero to defend the plan of San Luis
Potosi and who now
oppose by force the present Plan, are to be judged traitors t

o the cause they
defended and to the Fatherland, given the fact that in actual ity many of them to
please the tyrants for a handful of coins, or for bribes, are sp il ing the blood of their
brethren who demand the fulfil ment of the promises which don Francisco I. Madero made to the Nation. 11–
14. [Details the payment of the expenses of war and the administration of the country after the Plan's success, and b ids Madero to step down voluntarily.]

15. Mexicans: Consider that the cleverness and the bad faith of one man is spil ing
blood in a scandalous manner because of his inability to gov ern; consider that his
system of government is putting the Fatherland in chains an d by brute force of
bayonets trampling under foot our institutions; and as we rai sed our arms to elevate
him to power, today we turn them against him for having go ne back on his
agreements with the Mexican people and having betrayed t he Revolution he
initiated; we are not personalists, we are believers in princip les, not in men. People
of Mexico: Support with your arms in hand this Plan and you wil create prosperity and happiness for the Fatherland.

CHINA

China’s initial risings in 1911 led to the formal ending to the empire, in 1912, with a document that expressed new political goals while concealing the actual machinations that pushed the boy emperor to this point. This is followed by a fuller statement by the would-be reform leader of the new regime, the Western-educated Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), who formed a new Nationalist Party but was unsuccessful in wresting power from regional warlords during the early 1920s.

• • •

PROCLAMATION OF THE ABDICATION OF THE MANCHUS, 1912

“The Whole Country is tending towards a republican form of government. It is the Will of Heaven, and it is certain that we could not reject the people’s desire for the sake of one family’s honor and glory.”

“We, the Emperor, hand over the sovereignty to the people. We decide the form of government to be a constitutional republic.”

“In this time of transition, in order to unite the South and the North, We appoint Yuan Shi-kai to organize a provisional government, consulting the people’s army regarding the union of the five peoples, Manuchus, Chinese, Mongolians, Mohammedans, and Tibetans. These peoples jointly constitu

te the great State of Chung Hwa Ming-
Kus [a republic of China].

From Eva March Tappan, ed., China, Japan, and the Island of the Pacific, Vol. I of
The World's Story: A History of the World in Story, Song, and Art (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), 261.

"We retire to a peaceful life and wil enjoy the respectful tre atment of the nation."

This was signed by the Emperor; by Yuan Shi-
kai as Prime Minister; and also by the other Ministers.

SUN YAT-
SEN: FUNDAMENTALS OF NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION (192 3 C.E.) I Principles of Revolution

The term Kemin, or revolution, was first used by Confucius. I ncidents of a
revolutionary nature repeatedly happened in Chinese histor y after Tang (founder of
the Shang Dynasty, 1766 B.C.E.) and Wu (founder of the Zh ou Dynasty, 1122 B.C.E.). In
Europe revolutionary tides surged in the seventeenth and ei ghteenth centuries and
they have since spread over the whole world. In due course they created republics,
and they conferred constitutions on monarchies. The princip l es that I have held in
promoting the Chinese revolution were in some cases copie d from our traditional
ideals, in other cases modeled on European theory and expe rience, and in stil others
formulated according to original and self-
developed theories. They are described as fol ows:

1. PRINCIPLE OF NATIONALISM

Revelations of Chinese history prove that the Chinese as a people are independent in spirit and in conduct. Coerced into touch with other people, they could at times live in peace with them by maintaining friendly relations and at others assimilate them as the result of propinquity. During the periods when their political and military prowess declined, they could not escape for the time from the fate of a conquered nation, but they could eventual y vigorously reassert themselves. Nationalistic ideas in China did not come from a foreign source; they were inherited from our remote forefathers. Upon this legacy is based my principle of nationalism, and where necessary, I have developed it and amplified and improved upon it. No vengeance has been inflicted on the Manchus and we have endeavored to live side by side with them on an equal footing. This is our nationalistic policy toward races within our national boundaries. External y, we should strive to maintain independence in the family of nations, and to spread our indigenous civilization as wel as to enrich it by absorbing what is best in world civilization, with the hope that we may forge ahead with other nations towards the goal of ideal brotherhood.

2. PRINCIPLE OF DEMOCRACY

In ancient China we had the Emporer Yao (2357–2258 B.C.E.) and Emperor Shun (2258–

2206 B.C.E) who departed from the hereditary system and chose their successors. We also had Tang and Wu who overthrew kingdoms by revolution.

Preserved in our books are such sayings as: “Heaven sees as the people see; Heaven hears as the people hear.” “We have heard of a person name Zhou having been slain, we have not heard of a monarch having been murdered.” “The people are most important, while the king is of the least importance.” All these sayings ring with democratic sentiments. Since we have had only ideas about popular rights, and no democratic system has been evolved, we have to go to Europe and America for a republican form of government.…

All through my revolutionary career I have held the view that China must be made a republic. There are three reasons. First, from a theoretical point of view, there is no ground for preserving a monarchical form of government, since it is widely recognized that the people constitute the foundation of a nation and they are all equal in their own country. In the second place, under Manchu occupation the Chinese were forced into the position of the vanquished, and suffered oppression for more than two hundred and sixty years. While a constitutional monarchy may not arouse deep resentment in other countries and can maintain itself for the time being, it will be an impossibility in China. This is from a historical point of view. A third

it wil be an impossibility in China. This is from a historical p
oint of view. A third
reason may be advanced with an eye on the future of the na
tion. That in China
prolonged periods of disorder usual y fol owed a revolution
was due to the desire of
every insurgent to be a king and to his subsequent contenti
on for the throne. If a
republican government is adopted, there wil be no contenti
on. For these three
reasons, I have decided for the republican form of governme
nt in order to realize the principle of democracy.

My second decision is that a constitution must be adopted t
o ensure good
government. The true meaning of constitutionalism was disc
overed by Montesquieu.

The threefold separation of the legislative, judicial, and exec
utive powers as
advocated by him was accepted in every constitutional coun
try in Europe.

3. PRINCIPLE OF LIVELIHOOD

With the invention of modern machines, the phenomenon of
 uneven distribution of
wealth in the West has become al the more marked. Intensi
fied by crosscurrents,
economic revolution was flaring up more ferociously than po
litical revolution. This
situation was scarcely noticed by our fel ow-
countrymen thirty years ago. On my
tour of Europe and America, I saw with my own eyes the inst
ability of their
economic structure and the deep concern of their leaders in

groping for a solution. I
felt that, although the disparity of wealth under our economi c organization is not so
great as in the West, the difference is only in degree, not in character. The situation
wil become more acute when the West extends its economi c influence to China. We
must form plans beforehand in order to cope with the situati on. After comparing
various schools of economic thought, I have come to the rea lization that the
principle of state ownership is most profound, reliable and p ractical. Moreover, it
wil forestal in China difficulties which have already caused much anxiety in the
West. I have therefore decided to enforce the principle of th e people’s livelihood
simultaneously with the principles of nationalism and democ racy, with the hope to
achieve our political objective and nip economic unrest in th e bud.

I Fundamentals of Revolution

According to my plan, the progress of our revolution should be regulated and
divided into three stages: First, military rule; second, politica l tutelage; third,
constitutional government. The first stage is a period of dest ruction, during which
military rule is instal ed. The revolutionary army is to break down (as it did)
Manchu despotism, sweep away official corruption, and refor m vicious customs.

RUSSIA

This famous pamphlet was published in 1902, when Lenin's Bolshevik wing of the
Communist movement was under police attack and very mu ch out of power. It
suggests both the goals and the methods Lenin and his col e agues would use when revolution came.

When Lenin tried to organize a Marxist revolutionary party in Russia, he faced a
dilemma. The ultimate goal was a disciplined party. He was i rritated by the dissent
and controversy that raged in revolutionary circles. In this fa mous treatise he
outlined his ideas on freedom in powerful words that to later generations read like a
denunciation of freedom as it is normal y understood. Imple mented by Lenin himself
after the 1917 revolution and exacerbated by Stalin, they tr ansformed Marx's dream
of a "dictatorship of the proletariat" (absolute rule by the pe ople, depriving the old
ruling class of its power) into its opposite, a dictatorship ove r the proletariat. In
later decades, the rationale for repression outlined here was advanced again and

later decades, the rationale for repression outlined here was advanced again and
again by dictatorial Communist governments as they argued that the smal

"vanguard" of the proletariat was capable of leading the ma sses for their own good,

even in opposition to their express wil . Why does he argue no criticism can be made of socialist ideology?

• • •

V. I. LENIN, WHAT IS TO BE DONE

“Freedom”—
it’s a great word, but under the flag of “freedom of industry” the most
rapacious of wars were conducted. Under the banner of “fre edom of labor” workers
have been robbed. The very same internal hypocrisy is cont ained in the
contemporary phrase “freedom to criticize.” People who are truly convinced that
they have advanced the frontier of science would not dema nd freedom for new ideas
to coexist next to old, but to replace them....

We are walking in a smal , tight group along a steep and diffi cult path, firmly
joining hands. We are surrounded by enemies, and must con tinue almost always
under their fire. We have freely and consciously decided to u nite to fight the enemy.

...

We said that Social-
Democratic consciousness could not exist among the worker s.

But it could be brought to them from without. The history of al countries testifies
that workers left exclusively to their own strength can cultiv ate only a trade union consciousness—

that is the belief in the need to unite into a union, struggle a gainst
the bosses, press the government to pass needed labor legi slation, etc. The doctrine
of Socialism grew out of philosophic, historical, and economi c theories which were
worked out by the educated representatives of the propertie d class, the intel igentsia.

The founders of modern scientific socialism, Marx and Engel s belonged themselves
to the bourgeois intel igentsia. Just as in Russia, the theoreti cal doctrine of Social-
Democracy arose quite independently from spontaneous gro wth of a workers
movement, but arose rather as a natural and inevitable resu lt of the development of
ideas among the revolutionary socialist intel igentsia….

Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology devel oped by the working
masses in the process of their movement, the only choice is: bourgeois or socialist
ideology. There is no middle way (for mankind has not devel oped any “third”

ideology), and general y speaking, in a society torn by class opposition there could never be a non-class or an above-
class ideology. Therefore any belittlement of
socialist ideology, any dismissal of it signified the strengthe ning of bourgeois ideology.

A smal , tight, solid nucleus of the most dependable, experie nced and hardened
workers having trustworthy representatives in the main regi ons and connected by al

the rules of secrecy with the organization of revolutionaries can quite capably, with
the widest support of the masses and without any formal or ganization, fulfil al
functions of a professional organization, in a manner desirab le to a Social-Democratic movement.

LENIN'S CALL TO POWER, OCTOBER 24, 1917

When revolution broke out in Russia, Lenin was in exile in S witzerland. But the
German government facilitated his travel to Russia, hoping his agitation would
weaken the Russian war effort in World War I (an effort the fi rst revolutionary
government, under the liberal Kerensky, attempted to contin ue). Lenin's statement
accurately reflected the forceful moves he and the revolutio nary workers' soviets

accurately reflected the forceful moves he and the revolutio nary workers' soviets
would adopt in toppling the liberal regime and replacing it w ith Communist leadership.

• • •

The situation is critical in the extreme. In fact, it is now abso lutely clear that to
delay the uprising would be fatal. With al my might I urge c omrades to realize that
everything now hangs by a thread; that we are confronted b y problems which are
not to be solved by conferences or congresses (even congre sses of Soviets), but

exclusively by peoples, by the masses, by the struggle of th e armed people....

Al districts, al regiments, al forces must be mobilized at on ce and must
immediately send their delegations to the Revolutionary Mili tary Committee and to
the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks with the insistent d emand that under no
circumstances should power be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co....

... It would be an infinite crime on the part of the revolutiona ries were they to let
the chance slip, knowing that the salvation of the revolution, the offer of peace, the
salvation of Petrograd [St. Petersburg], salvation from famin e, the transfer of the
land to the peasants depend upon them.

The government is tottering. It must be given the death-blow at al costs.

THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF LAND SOCIALIZATION

This decree was one of the early moves of the new Bolshevi k regime, ushering in a
huge social and economic change but also setting up a radic al new system of
agricultural organization that would antagonize many peasa nts.

• • •

Decree of the Central Executive Commit ee, February 19, 19 18

PART I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1. Al private ownership of land, minerals, waters, for ests, and natural
resources within the boundaries of the Russian Federated So viet Republic is abolished forever.

Article 2. Henceforth al the land is handed over without co mpensation (open or
secret) to the toiling masses for their use.

Article 3. With the exceptions indicated in this decree the rig ht to the use of the land
belongs to him who cultivates it with his own labor.

Article 4. The right to use of the land cannot be limited on a ccount of sex, religion, nationality, or citizenship.

Article 5. Al minerals, forests, water, and other live forces of nature (depending on
their importance) are placed at the disposition of the uzed, gubernia, regional, or
federal Soviets to be control ed by them. The methods of uti lizing and managing the
above resources wil be determined by special decree.

Article 6. Al privately owned live stock, agriculture impleme nts, and buildings of
estates that are worked by hired labor shal be taken over b y the land departments
of the [local and Soviet governments] without compensation ....

Article 11. In addition to effecting an equitable distribution o f the agricultural land
among the toiling agricultural population and a more efficie nt utilization of the

national resources, the local and federal land departments h ave also the fol owing
duties: (a) to create conditions favorable to the developmen t of the productive
forces of the country by increasing the productivity of the so il, to develop scientific

forces of the country by increasing the productivity of the so il, to develop scientific
farming, and to raise the general level of agricultural knowle dge among the land
toilers; (b) to create a reserve of agricultural land; (c) to dev elop agricultural
enterprises such as horticulture, apiculture, market-gardening, stock raising,
dairying, etc.; (d) to hasten in certain areas the transition fro m a less productive to a
more productive system of land cultivation by effecting a be tter distribution of the
agricultural population; (e) to encourage the col ective syste m of agriculture at the
expense of individual farming, the former being more econo mical and leading to socialistic economy.

CHAPTER 29

AUTHORITARIANISM ON THE RIGHT

Italian Fascism, German Nazism, And Argentine Peronism

A new kind of authoritarianism was born in Europe at the en d of the nineteenth
century. It built on strong nationalism but added a greater h ostility to liberal ideas
and institutions. Authoritarians resented the divisions and bi ckering of
parliamentary systems. They disliked individualism and the

consumer society,
believing that people should find a higher purpose in the nat ion and its state. Most
feared the rise of socialism, seeking to cure social il s by oth er, state-sponsored
means. Authoritarianism was a noisy but also a smal force i n Europe until the huge
disruptions of World War I. Then additional nationalist discon tents, the fear of
Communism in Russia, and sheer confusion gave the authori tarian movements
additional support. First in Italy, then in other countries, the movements were able
to gain power, usual y by legal means, though none ever ob tained an outright majority in any free election.

Authoritarianism also grew outside Europe. In Latin America many authoritarian
dictators had flourished at times during the nineteenth cent ury; they were cal ed
caudil os, the Spanish word for leader. Most authoritarians d efended existing institutions—
property owners, the army, the church. They gained power because of
the difficulty of establishing stable governments after the in dependence wars earlier
in the century. Some caudil os added a populist twist, wooin g elements of the
common people by programs of public works and state jobs. Authoritarianism
continued in the twentieth century, off and on, and it picked up some of the
trappings of European fascism, from grandiose principles of state power and
nationalism to the uniformed movements, whose members were taught to march in

military style, a tactic designed to whip up loyalty and discip line. Authoritarian
leaders sprang up in Africa, the Middle East, and parts of Asi a after World War II,
again in part because some newly independent states found it hard to generate
effective political institutions in any other way. Some of thes e leaders, too, took on certain fascist overtones.

A comparison of European fascism and a significant adaptati on of
authoritarianism in Latin America al ows consideration of on e of the vital political
currents of the twentieth century. Authoritarian movements, after the fascist
example, undoubtedly shared certain features and imitated each other, but they were
not al alike. Ideas varied, and contexts varied as wel ; a ful Nazi-style state was
possible only in an industrialized society, for example. Even in Europe, Italian
fascism and German Nazism clearly differed, despite some s hared causes and shared impulses.

Mussolini's movement came first, among the modern versio ns of authoritarianism;
Mussolini came into power in 1923. A former socialist, Muss olini developed a fascist
ideology amid the social strife and disappointed nationalism of post–World War I
Italy. Italian liberal democracy was a rather new creation, an d it was not functioning wel .

Hitler, an ardent nationalist and anti-
Semite and a disgruntled war veteran,
struggled through the 1920s. Many Germans deeply resente

d their loss in World War
I and the harsh peace imposed on their country. But Hitler g
ot his chance only when

I and the harsh peace imposed on their country. But Hitler g
ot his chance only when
economic depression, in 1929, fueled the discontent; he ca
me to power in 1933.

But by the late nineteenth century some Latin American Cau
dil os were
embel ishing their dictatorships by working for greater econ
omic development and
reaching out for more active popular support. Juan Peron wa
s in this newer
tradition. When he came to power in 1946, he also had the e
xample of European fascism before him—
Argentina was one of the more Europeanized Latin American
countries, with a large minority of Italian origin.

A key analytical problem, as sources from fascism, Nazism,
and Peronism readily
attest, is that leaders of those movements were not interest
ed in careful statements
of principle or even in complete consistency. They talked of
subordinating the
individual to higher purposes, but they also praised human f
reedom. They were
hostile to Marxism, but they often talked about social justice
and sometimes (as with
Peron) established themselves as friends of the working clas
s in order to gain extensive working-class support.

A final question must be applied to Mussolini, to Hitler, and t
o Peron alike: why
did they gain so much popularity? Do their ideas help explai

n the appeal of
authoritarian movements in many different countries from t
he 1920s onward?

Questions

1. Why was fascism opposed to socialism? to democracy? to liberalism? What was the fascist alternative, according to Mussolini? What were the principles and goals of a fascist state?

2. How did the fascist state contrast with the liberal idea of the state? What was the fascist alternative to individualism?

3. What was Hitler's definition of a folkish state? How do Hitler's ideas show the bases of the launching of World War II and the Holocaust?

4. What ideas did Mussolini and Hitler share concerning methods for their movements? Did they have similar ideas about the state? Did Mussolini anticipate Hitler's ideas of a folkish state?

5. Why did Hitler, Mussolini, and Peron al claim to be revolutionary?

6. How do Mussolini, Hitler, and Peron suggest some of the political and social problems that gave rise to their movements?

7. How did Peron learn what not to say, from the fates and international reputations of Italian and German fascism?

8. How did Peron's ideas of the nation compare with Hitler's? How did his idea of individualism compare with the fascist approach? Judging by his stated goals, is it useful to think of Peron as a fascist? as a Nazi?

9. How did Peron distinguish himself from traditional Latin A merican caudil os?

10. If Peron should not be cal ed a fascist, how are his politic al movement and beliefs best described?

For Further Discussion

1. Why might elements of European fascism prove attractive in the Latin American political context after World War II?

2. Why was it unlikely that a leader like Peron could set up a ful Nazi state?

3. What was the relationship between fascistlike movements and nationalism? What kinds of nationalism avoided some kind of fascist outgrowth, and why?

4. Do conditions for fascism stil exist in the world today? W hat societies, currently, would seem the most likely potential centers of serious fasci st movements?

ITALIAN FASCISM: MUSSOLINI

Mussolini (1883–1945) came to power in 1923, fol owing a famous “march on Rome” when armed bands (Squadriste), which had been viol ently disrupting democratic political meetings, mounted a largely peaceful, s ymbolic protest surge on the national capital. Mussolini spel ed out his fascist doctrin e (the name fascist came from the movement’s symbol, a bundle or fascio) at various points in his career. The fol owing selection comes from a 1932 article, “Doctrine of F

ascism," written at a
time when he was already wel established as dictator. Durin g the 1920s Mussolini
had suppressed political opposition and had developed exte nsive public works
projects, while dismantling the previous liberal state and tur ning parliament into a
rubber stamp. Mussolini was toppled by the al ied invasion o f Italy during World War II and kil ed by resistance fighters.

From Benito Mussolini, The Political and Social Doctrine of Fa scism, trans. Jane Soames (London: Hogarth Press, 1933), 8–14, 16–26.

• • •

Fascism was not the nursling of a doctrine worked out befor ehand with detailed
elaboration; it was born of the need for action and was itself from the beginning
practical rather than theoretical; it was not merely another p olitical party but, even
in the first two years, in opposition to al political parties as such, and itself a living
movement. The name which I then (1919) gave the organiza tion fixed its character.

And yet, if one were to re-
read, in the now dusty columns of that date, the report of the meeting in which the Fasci Italiani di combattimento wer e constituted, one
would there find no ordered expression of doctrine, but a ser ies of aphorisms,
anticipations and aspirations which, when refined by time fr om the original ore,
were destined after some years to develop into an ordered s

eries of doctrinal
concepts, forming the Fascist political doctrine—
different from al others either of
the past or the present day.…

The years which preceded the march to Rome were years of great difficulty,
during which the necessity for action did not permit of resea rch or any complete
elaboration of doctrine. The battle had to be fought in the to wns and vil ages. There was much discussion, but—
what was more important and more sacred—men died.

They knew how to die. Doctrine, beautiful y defined and car eful y elucidated…

might be lacking; but there was to take its place something more decisive—Faith.

Even so, anyone… wil find that the fundamentals of doctrin e were cast during the
years of conflict. It was precisely in those years that Fascist t hought armed itself,
was refined, and began the great task of organization. The p roblem of the relation
between the individual citizen and the State; the al ied probl ems of authority and
liberty; political and social problems as wel as those specifi cal y national—a
solution was being sought for al these while at the same ti me the struggle against
Liberalism, Democracy, Socialism and the Masonic bodies w as being carried on.…

And above al , Fascism… believes neither in the possibility n or the utility of

perpetual peace. It thus repudiates the doctrine of Pacifism —born of a renunciation
of the struggle and an act of cowardice in the face of sacrific e. War alone brings up
to its highest tension al human energy and puts the stamp of nobility upon the
peoples who have the courage to meet it.... This anti-Pacifist spirit is carried by
Fascism even into the life of the individual; the proud motto of the Squadrista, “Me

Fascism even into the life of the individual; the proud motto of the Squadrista, “Me ne frego” [“We don’t give a damn”]... is an act of philosophy not only stoic, the
summary of a doctrine not only political—
it is the education to combat, the
acceptation of the risks which combat implies, and a new w ay of life for Italy. Thus
the Fascist accepts life and loves it, knowing nothing of and despising suicide: he
rather conceives of life as a duty and struggle and conquest, life which should be
high and ful , lived for oneself, but above al for others....

Such a conception of life makes Fascism the complete oppos ition of that doctrine, the base of so-
cal ed scientific and Marxian Socialism, the materialist conc eption of
history; according to which the history of human civilization can be explained
simply through the conflict of interests among the various s ocial groups and by the
change and development in the means and instruments of p roduction. ... Fascism,
now and always, believes in holiness and in heroism; that is to say, in actions

influenced by no economic motive, direct or indirect. … It fol ows that the existence
of an unchangeable and unchanging classwar is also denied —the natural progeny of
the economic conception of history. And above al Fascism d enies that classwar can
be the preponderant force in the transformation of society. T hese two fundamental
concepts of Socialism being thus refuted, nothing is left of it but the sentimental
aspiration … towards a social convention in which the sorro ws and sufferings of the
humblest shal be al eviated. … Fascism denies the validity of the equation, wel -

being=happiness, which would reduce men to the level of a nimals, caring for one thing only—to be fat and wel -fed— and would thus degrade humanity to a purely
physical existence.

After Socialism, Fascism combats the whole complex system of democratic
ideology, and repudiates it, whether in its theoretical premis es or in its practical
application. Fascism denies that the majority, by the simple fact that it is a majority,
can direct human society; it denies that numbers alone can govern by means of a
periodical consultation, and it affirms the immutable, benefi cial and fruitful
inequality of mankind, which can never be permanently leve led through the mere
operation of a mechanical process such as universal suffrag e. The democratic regime
may be defined as from time to time giving the people the il usion of sovereignty,

while the real effective sovereignty lies in the hands of other concealed and irresponsible forces....

Fascism has taken up an attitude of complete opposition to the doctrines of Liberalism, both in the political field and the field of economics.... Liberalism only flourished for half a century....

The foundation of Fascism is the conception of the State, its character, its duty, and its aim. Fascism conceives of the State as an absolute, in comparison with which all individuals or groups are relative, only to be conceived of in their relation to the State. The conception of the Liberal State is not that of a directing force, guiding the play and development, both material and spiritual, of a collective body, but merely a force limited to the function of recording results: on the other hand, the Fascist State is itself conscious, and has itself a will and a personality—thus it may be called the "ethic" State. In 1929... I said:

"For us Fascists, the State is not merely a guardian... nor is it an organization with purely material aims. ... Nor is it a purely political creation. ... The State, as conceived of and as created by Fascism, is a spiritual and moral fact in itself, since its political, juridical and economic organization of the nation is a concrete thing; and such an organization must be in its origins and development a manifestation of the spirit. The State is the guarantor of security both internal and external, but it is

the spirit. The State is the guarantor of security both interna
l and external, but it is
also the custodian and transmitter of the spirit of the people
, as it has grown up
through the centuries in language, in customs and in faith. A
nd the State is not only
a living reality of the present, it is also linked with the past a
nd above al with the
future, and thus transcending the brief limits of individual lif
e, it represents the immanent spirit of the nation.…”

From 1929 until today [1932], evolution, both political and e
conomic, has
everywhere gone to prove the validity of these doctrinal pre
mises. Of such gigantic
importance is the State. It is the force which alone can provi
de a solution to the
dramatic contradictions of capitalism, and that state of affai
rs which we cal the
crisis can only be dealt with by the State, as between other
States. … Yet the Fascist
State is unique, and an original creation. It is not reactionary
, but revolutionary, in
that it anticipates the solution of the universal political probl
ems which elsewhere
have to be settled in the political field by the rivalry of parti
es, the excessive power
of the Parliamentary regime and the irresponsibility of politic
al assemblies; while it
meets the problems of the economic field by a system of sy
ndicalism* which is
continual y increasing in importance, as much in the sphere
of labour as of industry:
and in the moral field enforces order, discipline, and obedie
nce to that which is the
determined moral code of the country. Fascism desires the S

tate to be a strong and
organic body, at the same time reposing upon broad and po
pular support. The
Fascist State has drawn into itself even the economic activiti
es of the nation, and,
through the corporative social and educational institutions c
reated by it, its
influence reaches every aspect of the national life and inclu
des, framed in their
respective organizations, al the political, economic and spiri
tual forces of the
nation. A State which reposes upon the support of mil ions o
f individuals who
recognize its authority, are continual y conscious of its powe
r and are ready at once
to serve it, is not the old tyrannical State. … The individual i
n the Fascist State is not
annul ed but rather multiplied, just in the same way that a s
oldier in a regiment is
not diminished but rather increased by the number of his co
mrades. The Fascist
State organizes the nation, but leaves a sufficient margin of
liberty to the individual;
the latter is deprived of al useless and possibly harmful free
dom, but retains what is
essential; the deciding power in the question cannot be the i
ndividual, but the State alone.…

According to Fascism, government is not so much a thing to
be expressed in
territorial or military terms as in terms of morality and the s
pirit. It must be thought of as an Empire—
that is to say, a nation which directly or indirectly rules othe
r
nations, without the need for conquering a single square yar
d of territory. For

Fascism, the growth of Empire, that is to say the expansion of the nation, is an
essential manifestation of vitality, and its opposite a sign of decadence. Peoples
which are rising, or rising again after a period of decadence, are always imperialist;
any renunciation is a sign of decay and death. Fascism is the doctrine best adapted
to represent the tendencies and the aspirations of a people, like the people of Italy,
who are rising again after many centuries of abasement and foreign servitude. But Empire demands discipline, the co-ordination of al forces and a deeply-felt sense of
duty and sacrifice: this fact explains … the necessarily sever e measures which must
be taken against those who would oppose this spontaneous and inevitable movement of Italy in the twentieth century.

*Mussolini meant this as an alternative to class-based unions. He instal ed state-dominated employer-worker boards, outlawing other unions and strikes.

GERMAN NAZISM: HITLER

The fol owing passage comes from Hitler's Mein Kampf, whic h outlined his goals for
a Nazi state with suprising frankness. Hitler wrote the book after he was jailed for
an attempted revolt in a Munich beer hal in 1923. He was re leased in less than a
year and resumed his propaganda activities, though his mov ement was foundering
until the Depression hit Germany at the end of the decade. Then, votes for Nazism
began to soar, reaching more than a third of the total in a 1 932 election. Once he

was in power in 1933, Hitler constructed a dictatorship; acti vely promoted
economic development, particularly toward building up Ger man armaments;
attacked and ultimately kil ed most Jews in Germany and Eu rope (the Holocaust);
and launched a series of aggressive moves that led to World War II, committing
suicide in 1945 as Soviet armies invaded Berlin.

• • •

For the realization of philosophical ideals and of the demand s derived from them no
more occurs through men's pure feeling or inner wil in them selves than the
achievement of freedom through the general longing for it. No, only when the ideal
urge for independence gets a fighting organization in the for m of military
instruments of power can the pressing desire of a people be transformed into glorious reality.

Every philosophy of life, even if it is a thousand times correc t and of highest
benefit to humanity, wil remain without significance for the practical shaping of a
people's life, as long as its principles have not become the b anner of a fighting
movement which for its part in turn wil be a party as long a s its activity has not
found completion in the victory of its ideas and its party dog mas have not become
the new state principles of a people's community....

This transformation of a general, philosophical, ideal concep tion of the highest truth into a definitely delimited, tightly organized political co mmunity of faith and struggle, unified in spirit and wil , is the most significant ach ievement, since on its happy solution alone the possibility of the victory of an idea depends. From the army of often mil ions of men, who as individuals more or le ss clearly and definitely sense these truths, and in part perhaps comprehend them, one man must step forward who with apodictic force wil form granite principles from the wavering idea-world of the broad masses and take up the struggle for their sole correctness, until from the shifting waves of a free thought-world there wil arise a brazen cliff of solid unity in faith and wil .

From Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf, trans. Ralph Manheim (Bosto n: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), 380, 390–95. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

The general right for such an activity is based on necessity, the personal right on success....

What has been profitably Germanized in history is the soil w hich our ancestors acquired by the sword and settled with German peasants. In so far as they directed foreign blood into our national body in this process, they con tributed to that catastrophic splintering of our inner being which is expresse d in German super-individualism—

a phenomenon, I am sorry to say, which is praised in many quarters.

...

... [T]he state must, therefore, in the light of reason, regard its highest task as the preservation and intensification of the race, this fundamental condition of al human cultural development.

It was the Jew, Karl Marx, who was able to draw the extreme inference from

It was the Jew, Karl Marx, who was able to draw the extreme inference from
those false conceptions and views concerning the nature and purpose of a state: by detaching the state concept from racial obligations without being able to arrive at any other equal y acknowledged formulation, the bourgeois world even paved the way for a doctrine which denies the state as such....

It is, therefore, the first obligation of a new movement, standing on the ground of a folkish world view, to make sure that its conception of the nature and purpose of the state attains a uniform and clear character.

Thus the basic realization is: that the state represents no end, but a means. It is, to be sure, the premise for the formation of a higher human culture, but not its cause, which lies exclusively in the existence of a race capable of culture. Hundreds of exemplary states might exist on earth, but if the Aryan* culture-bearer died out,

there would be no culture corresponding to the spiritual level of the highest peoples
of today. We can go even farther and say that the fact of human state formation
would not in the least exclude the possibility of the destruction of the human race,
provided that superior intel ectual ability and elasticity would be lost due to the absence of their racial bearers....

The state in itself does not create a specific cultural level; it can only preserve the
race which conditions this level. Otherwise the state as such may continue to exist
unchanged for centuries while, in consequence of a racial mixture which it has not
prevented, the cultural capacity of a people and the general aspect of its life
conditioned by it have long since suffered a profound change. The present-day state,
for example, may very wel simulate its existence as a formal mechanism for a
certain length of time, but the racial poisoning of our national body creates a
cultural decline which even now is terrifyingly manifest.

*Hitler used the term Aryan to designate the Germanic “race.”

Thus, the precondition for the existence of a higher humanity is not the state, but
the nation possessing the necessary ability....

The state is a means to an end. Its end lies in the preservation and advancement
of a community of physical y and psychical y homogeneous creatures. This

preservation itself comprises first of al existence as a race a nd thereby permits the
free development of al the forces dormant in this race. Of t hem a part wil always
primarily serve the preservation of physical life, and only th e remaining part the
promotion of a further spiritual development. Actual y the o ne always creates the precondition for the other.

States which do not serve this purpose are misbegotten, mo nstrosities in fact. The
fact of their existence changes this no more than the succes s of a gang of bandits can justify robbery.

We National Socialists as champions of a new philosophy of l ife must never base ourselves on so-
cal ed ‘accepted facts’—
and false ones at that. If we did, we would
not be the champions of a new great idea, but the coolies of the present-day lie. We
must distinguish in the sharpest way between the state as a vessel and the race as its
content. This vessel has meaning only if it can preserve and protect the content; otherwise it is useless.

Thus, the highest purpose of a folkish state is concern for th e preservation of
those original racial elements which bestow culture and crea te the beauty and
dignity of a higher mankind. We, as Aryans, can conceive of the state only as the
living organism of a nationality which not only assures the p reservation of this
nationality, but by the development of its spiritual and ideal abilities leads it to the

nationality, but by the development of its spiritual and ideal abilities leads it to the highest freedom.

But what they try to palm off on us as a state today is usual y nothing but a monstrosity born of deepest human error, with untold miser y as a consequence.

We National Socialists know that with this conception we sta nd as revolutionaries in the world of today and are also branded as such. But our t houghts and actions must in no way be determined by the approval or disapprov al of our time, but by the binding obligation to a truth which we have recognized. Then we may be convinced that the higher insight of posterity wil not only u nderstand our actions of today, but wil also confirm their correctness and exalt them ....

A state can be designated as exemplary if it is not only com patible with the living conditions of the nationality it is intended to represent, but i f in practice it keeps this nationality alive by its own very existence— quite regardless of the importance of this state formation within the framework of the outside w orld. For the function of the state is not to create abilities, but only to open the ro ad for those forces which are present. Thus, conversely, a state can be designat ed as bad if, despite a high cultural level, it dooms the bearer of this culture in his r acial composition. For thus it destroys to al intents and purposes the premise for t

he survival of this
culture which it did not create, but which is the fruit of a cult ure-creating
nationality safeguarded by a living integration through the s tate. The state does not
represent the content, but a form. A people’s cultural level a t any time does not,
therefore, provide a standard for measuring the quality of th e state in which it lives.

It is easily understandable that a people highly endowed wit h culture offers a more
valuable picture than a Negro tribe; nevertheless, the state organism of the former,
viewed according to its fulfil ment of purpose, can be inferio r to that of the Negro.

Though the best state and the best state form are not able t o extract from a people
abilities which are simply lacking and never did exist, a bad state is assuredly able to
kil original y existing abilities by permitting or even promoti ng the destruction of the racial culture-bearer.

Hence our judgment concerning the quality of a state can pr imarily be
determined only by the relative utility it possesses for a defi nite nationality, and in
no event by the intrinsic importance attributable to it in the world….

If, therefore, we speak of a higher mission of the state, we must not forget that
the higher mission lies essential y in the nationality whose fr ee development the

state must merely make possible by the organic force of its being.

ARGENTINA: PERONISM

The fol owing materials are excerpts from speeches given b y the Argentine dictator between 1946 and 1949, when he was head of state. Peron (1896–1973) entered the Argentine government as a result of a coup in 1943 and bec ame president in 1946.

Developing an ardent fol owing, particularly among urban w orkers, he launched extensive building projects and welfare programs. He was o usted in 1956, returning briefly thereafter, but a Peronist political movement remaine d an important force in Argentine politics for some time.

• • •

1. 1946

The Argentine Republic was born as a country of peace and work, endowed by nature with everything people may hope for to live happily a nd in peace; on this

nature with everything people may hope for to live happily a nd in peace; on this fact our international policy is based, we are inevitably head ing for prosperity and greatness achieved partly by reason of our geographical situ ation and by our historical destiny.

There is nothing we can envy others, since God gave us wha tever we may wish

for. Our policy is born of this aspect of our own natural great ness. We can never
seek to take something from someone since we are surroun ded on this earth by
countries less fortunate than ours. For this reason, our inter national policy is a
policy of peace, friendship, and the desire to trade honestly and freely, whenever we
are offered the same freedom we grant, for in a world where absolute freedom of
trade does not exist, it would be suicidal to profess this abso lute liberty.

From Juan Peron, The Voice of Peron (Buenos Aires: Argentin e Government, 1950), 22, 36–37, 59, 64, 69–
70, 71, 94, 110–11.

2. 1946

Social conscience has banished for ever the selfish individua lism that looked only for
personal advantages, to seek the welfare of al through the col ective action of
unions. Without that social conscience modern peoples are driven to struggle and
despair dragging their country to misery, war and distress.

This magnificent spectacle of the awakening of a social cons cience is condemned
by men maintaining old standards, but they must not be bla med for they are the
product of an unhappy era already surpassed by the Argenti ne Republic. They are
the product of that individualistic and selfish age. They were born when gold was
the only thing that mattered, when gold was handled withou

t consulting the heart
and therefore without understanding and realising that gold is not everything on this
earth, that dividends are not of paramount importance.

3. 1946

The Five-
Year Plan, as we have drawn it up, is simply the result of a careful study of
al the Argentine problems, in the institutional order, in the field of national
defence, and also in the field of national economy. We have considered each of these
Argentine problems in detail, trying to discover their roots in order to find an adequate solution.

Only a plan of vast proportions is in keeping with a great nation such as the
Argentine Republic. The mediocre, those who lack courage and faith, always prefer
smal plans. Great nations, such as our own, with lofty ambitions and aspirations,
must also envisage great plans. Nothing valuable can be achieved by planning trivialities.

4. 1946

Nowadays policy has changed: each person is at his post, working for the common
patrimony. When something is achieved, it must benefit everyone; when suffering
awaits us, al must share the sorrow. But let us advise those who stil uphold ideas of
the old politicians that today, Argentine men and Argentine women are aware of the

existence of a movement supported by the whole country; t hat we al work and
struggle for this joint movement; therefore, that any person al or group policy wil be
destroyed by us and also that our policy originates in this m ovement of union.

5. 1947

Encouraged by an overwhelming spirit of patriotism and ste adily fol owing the
principles and standards of conduct set by precedent, an offi cer must apply al his
strength of character and bring into play al his stalwart pers onality so that
whatever may be the circumstances in which they find them selves, the Armed Forces
wil never cease to be an orderly and disciplined institution at the exclusive service
of the Nation. He must be sure that they are never transfor med into a constant
danger which undervalues and hampers the wil of a soverei gn people.

6. 1948

To guide the masses one must first instruct and educate the m, which can be done at
meetings or at lectures on politics, to be given in our centre s, not to tel them to
vote for us, or that they must do this or that so that Peter or James wil be elected to
represent them. No, we must speak to them of what are thei r obligations, because in
our country there is much talk of rights and little of moral ob ligations. We must talk

somewhat more about the obligations of each citizen toward s his country and
towards his fel ow countrymen, and forget for a time their ri ghts since we have mentioned them often enough.

7. 1949

The Peronistic doctrine has to go forward with its fundament al idea; to free the
people to prepare them to make the right use of this freedo m. Neither can any
Argentine, and stil less a Peronist, use unfairly the individua l freedom which the
Magna Charter of the Republic offers him as a man of honou r and not as a criminal.

A Peronist must be a slave to the law because that is the onl y way in which he can
eventual y obtain his freedom. But it is not enough for a Per onist to be a slave of the
law. He must also observe the Peronist code of ethics, becau se those who break laws
are not the only criminals, those who abuse their freedom a nd who break the
community laws of the land they live in to the detriment of t heir fel ow beings, are also guilty.

8. 1949

Liberal Democracy, flexible in matters of political or econom ic retrocession, or
apparent discretion, was not equal y flexible where social pr oblems were concerned.

And the bourgeoisie after breaking their lines, have present ed the spectacle of
peoples who al rise at once so as to measure the might of t

heir presence, the volume
of their clamour, and the fairness of their claims. Popular ex pectation is fol owed by
discontent. Hope placed in the power of law is transformed i nto resentment if these
laws tolerate injustice. The State looks on impotently at a gr owing loss of prestige.

Its institutions prevent it from taking adequate measures an d there are signs of a
divorce between its interpretation and that of the nation whi ch it professes to
represent. Having lost prestige it becomes ineffectual, and i s threatened by rebel ion,
because if society does not find in the ruling powers the inst rument with which to
achieve its happiness it wil devise in its unprotected state, t he instrument with which to overthrow them.

9. 1949

The ambition for social progress has nothing to do with its n oisy partisan
exploitation, neither can it be achieved by reviling and lower ing the different types
of men. Mankind needs faith in his destiny and in what he is doing and to possess
sufficient insight to realise that the transition from the “I” to the “we” does not take

sufficient insight to realise that the transition from the “I” to the “we” does not take
place in a flash as the extermination of the individual, but as a renewed avowal of
the existence of the individual functioning in the community. In that way the

phenomenon is orderly and takes place during the years in t
he form of a necessary
evolution which is more in the nature of “coming of age” tha
n that of a mutiny.

11. 1949

The “caudil o” [name given to South American autocratic po
litical leaders]

improvises while the statesman makes plans and carries the
m out. The “caudil o” has
no initiative, the statesman is creative. The “caudil o” is onl
y concerned with
measures which are applicable to the reigning circumstance
s whereas the statesman
plans for al time; the deeds of the “caudil o” die with him, b
ut the statesman lives
on in his handiwork. For that reason the “caudil o” has no gu
iding principles or clear-
cut plan while the statesman works methodical y, defeating
time and
perpetuating himself in his own creations. “Caudil ismo” is a
 trade, but statecraft is an art.

12. 1949

The politician of the old school made posts and favouritism
a question of politics,
because as he achieved nothing of general usefulness, he h
ad at least to win the good
wil of those who would support him in the field of politics. T
he natural
consequences of this nepotism were political cliques; one po
litician dominated one
clique and another a different one. They fought among them

selves until one of the
cliques came out on top and from them emerged the genera
l staff bent not on fulfil ing their public office with self-
denial and sacrifice, but on making the most of
their position to use the Nation as a huge body at the servic
e of their own interests
and to throw away the wealth of the country with [no] sense
 of order and the fitness of things.…

13. 1949

The revolutionary idea would not have been able to material
ise along constitutional
lines if it had not been able to withstand the criticism, the vi
olent attacks and even
the strain on principles when they run up against the rocks
which appear, every day,
in the path of a ruler. The principles of the revolution would
not have been able to
be upheld if they had not been the true reflection of Argenti
ne sentiments.

The guiding principles of our movement must have made a
very deep impression
on the national conscience for the people in the last election
s to have consecrated
them by giving us ful power to make reforms.

CHAPTER 30

DROPPING THE ATOMIC BOMB ON JAPAN

On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bo
mb on Hiroshima, kil ing
eighty thousand people and injuring and sickening many mo
re; three days later it
unleashed another, on Nagasaki, which kil ed ninety thousa

nd (including later
deaths from radiation sickness). Japan surrendered the next day.

This chapter deals with issues surrounding the atomic bomb. Bombing Japan not
only hastened the end of World War II. It also opened a new age of military
technology, which would steadily escalate during the Cold War. The threats and
fears associated with atomic weaponry have been part of world experience ever
since 1945. In the selections that follow, two sets of comparisons are offered: first, a
comparison of the tenor of the American decision to drop the bomb with Japanese
reactions; second, a comparison of historical memory, of how groups in the United
States and Japan still disputed the interpretation of what happened, fifty years after
the event. The second comparison is based on a summary of a bitter dispute about
historical presentation in the United States, at the national museum complex, the Smithsonian.

American scientists were not unanimous in recommending dropping the bomb:
some urged a demonstration first to give Japan a chance to surrender. But there
were few bombs available, and the decision to act directly reflected an eagerness to
end the war, the desire to punish Japanese intransigence, and a new concern about
Russian intervention in the area. The first two documents suggest American attitudes

—
first, those of President Truman, who made the decision, and second, those revealed in the description of the Hiroshima mission by the pilot of the decisive plane, the super fortress Enola Gay. What kinds of attitudes are suggested about the bomb itself and about the Japanese? How did these two Americans relate themselves to one of the great events of contemporary history? A third passage, by a doctor in Nagasaki, recounts the experience of being bombed. Needless to say, from a comparative standpoint, the three documents together show the huge differences in perspective between people who do the bombing and people on the receiving end of an unprecedented technological experience. (This comparison deserves consideration in terms of another event-based, two-sided comparison, the one that deals with the Opium War, in chapter 20.)

Following World War II, of course, the United States developed its nuclear weaponry further, as fears of the Soviet Union increased and several other powers joined the nuclear arms race. Japan, under American occupation but also profoundly affected by the war itself, abandoned significant military activity and did not participate in the weapons buildup.

The second set of comparative issues requires more subtle analysis. An article by an American scholar recounts the bitter divisions that arose in the United States in

1995 over a proposed Smithsonian Institution commemorati on of the bomb's
anniversary. The planned Enola Gay exhibit presented Ameri can historians' current
understanding of the complexity of the event, in light of wha t was known by then
about motives and alternatives. This complex rendering (wit h which the author of
the article clearly agrees) aroused massive hostility from vet erans' groups and a growing conservative-
nationalist sentiment in Congress at the time. The exhibit w as

growing conservative-
nationalist sentiment in Congress at the time. The exhibit w as
replaced with a simpler narrative, about the Enola Gay itself. Japan protested this
version because it clashed with its own complex memories. Historical memory is an
active ingredient in the life of any society, and it is almost al ways composed of a
mixture of selected facts and myths. After World War II most Americans were eager
to see former opponents confront their "real" war history. Th e Germans should teach
about the evils of Nazism; the Japanese should teach about t heir wartime atrocities,
including mistreatment of many prisoners. Neither nation m oved as far along as
some observers thought they should, because nationalist tra ditions and the task of
rebuilding an undeniably different political structure made c onfronting too much
pain too difficult. But some Japanese, even in official life, did acknowledge some of

the wartime responsibilities. The United States has its own s
et of historical memory
issues (not just concerning the war) as it teaches its national
 history. Is the dropping
of the atomic bomb something Americans should probe mor
e deeply, in order to understand themselves?

Questions

1. What were President Truman's motives in deciding to use the bomb? Did he understand its potential? How did Truman's note suggest he was justifying his decision to himself?

2. What kinds of attitudes does the Tibbets note suggest? What were Tibbets's feelings about his unprecedented mission and its results? Would he and Truman have agreed about the way to approach the use of the bomb? What are the best arguments today for defending Truman's policy and Tibbets's participation? What are the leading questions about the policy?

3. How do Tibbets's and Akizuki's descriptions of the bomb's impact compare? How do the two accounts prepare for the different (American and Japanese) historical memories John Dower describes?

4. Do you think the Smithsonian was right to withdraw the original exhibit?

5. What kind of historical memory did John Dower think we should have? Why did he feel that rosy memories about World War II remain so important in the United States?

6. What attitudes toward Japan were involved in dropping the bomb? Are any remnants of those feelings stil active now in the United States?

7. What kind of historical memory of the bomb do most Japa
nese seek? Why did
they protest the simpler Smithsonian exhibit that replaced t
he controversial display?

8. What are the main disputes over how to remember the bo
mbing, within each
country (United States and Japan) and between them?

For Further Discussion

1. Was dropping the bomb a “war crime”?

2. Did the atomic bomb change the nature of modern war a
nd diplomacy?

3. Why did the bomb experience have such different impact
s in the United States and Japan?

4. Why both the American and the Japanese versions of rem
embering the bomb
seem so important to citizens of the two nations, so long aft
er the fact?

5. What kind of bomb “memory” works for you, and why?

DROPPING THE BOMB: TRUMAN, TIBBETS, AND AKIZUKI
The fol owing three selections surround the immediate expe
rience of the bomb, in 1945. Harry Truman was the thirty-
third president of the United States, assuming
office after the death of Franklin Roosevelt in April 1945. Wh
en he took office,
Truman was immediately confronted with basic military and
foreign policy issues as
World War II drew to a close. Decisions about the bomb, dev
eloped after five years
of crash research, were paramount among these issues. Tru

man here writes at the Potsdam Conference—
the last conference among the al ies, including Stalin of the Soviet Union and Churchil of Britain—
which dealt with conditions of the postwar
world. Tensions between Stalin and the Western powers ran high at Potsdam.

Col. Paul Tibbets was an experienced pilot in the U.S. Army Air Force (the Air
Force had not yet become a separate military branch). He w as twenty-nine when he
piloted the Enola Gay. Later, he frequently defended his acti on and refuted rumors
that he had suffered mental il ness as a result of remorse. In 1995 he argued that he
had never had any doubts about his action and that it had s aved lives by hastening
the end of the war. Earlier, in 1976, he had caused controver sy by recreating the
attack in a Texas airshow complete with mushroom cloud; Ja panese bomb survivors protested this act as cal ous.

Dr. Tatsuichiro Akizuki practiced medicine in Nagasaki. He d escribed his
experiences after learning about the earlier bomb in Hiroshi ma and then after the
second bomb was dropped on his own city. His recol ections were extremely unusual
because there were so few survivors, though the doctor him self lived a number of years after the attack.

• • •

HARRY TRUMAN

Diary: Potsdam 25 July 1945

We met at eleven today. That is Stalin, Churchil , and the US President. But I had a
most important session with Lord Mountbatten and General Marshal before that.

We have discovered the most terrible bomb in the history of the world. It may be the
fire destruction prophesied in the Euphrates Val ey Era, after Noah and his fabulous Ark.

Anyway we ‘think’ we have found the way to cause a disinte gration of the atom.

An experiment in the New Mexican desert was startling— to put it mildly. Thirteen
pounds of the explosive caused the complete disintegration of a steel tower 60 feet
high, created a crater 6 feet deep and 1,200 feet in diamete r, knocked over a steel
tower 1/2 mile away and knocked men down 10,000 yards a way. The explosion was
visible for more than 200 miles and audible for 40 miles and more.

This weapon is to be used against Japan between now and A ugust 10th. I have
told the Sec. of War, Mr Stimson, to use it so that military ob jectives and soldiers
and sailors are the target and not women and children. Even if the Japs are savages,
ruthless, merciless and fanatic, we as the leader of the worl d for the common
welfare cannot drop this terrible bomb on the old capital or t he new.

He and I are in accord. The target wil be a purely military on
e and we wil issue
a warning statement asking the Japs to surrender and save l
ives. I’m sure they wil
not do that, but we wil have given them the chance. It is ce
rtainly a good thing for
the world that Hitler’s crowd or Stalin’s did not discover this
atomic bomb. It seems
to be the most terrible thing ever discovered, but it can be
made the most useful.

[The fol owing day, 26 July, the Al ies cal ed upon Japan to s
urrender. The
alternative they said was ‘prompt and utter destruction.’ Jap
an did not surrender.]

From Harry S. Truman, Off the Record: The Private Papers of
Harry S. Truman (New York: Harper and Row, 1986), 55–
56. Reprinted by permission of Ann Elmo Agency, Inc. West.

COL. PAUL TIBBETS, USAAF PILOT OF THE BOMB-
CARRYING PLANE

Up to this point it was common practice in any theatre of wa
r to fly straight ahead,
fly level, drop your bombs, and keep right on going, because
 you could bomb
several thousands of feet in the air and you could cross the t
op of the place that you
had bombed with no concern whatsoever. But it was determi
ned by the scientists
that, in order to escape and maintain the integrity of the air
craft and the crew, that
this aeroplane could not fly forward after it had dropped the
bomb. It had to turn
around and get away from that bomb as fast as it could. If y

ou placed this aeroplane
in a very steep angle of bank to make this turn, if you turne d 158 degrees from the
direction that you were going, you would then begin to plac e distance between
yourself and that point of explosion as quickly as possible. Y ou had to get away
from the shock wave that would be coming back from the gr ound in the form of an
ever expanding circle as it came upwards. It’s necessary to make this turn to get
yourself as far as possible from an expanding ring and 158 d egrees happened to be
the turn for that particular circle. It was difficult. It was some thing that was not
done with a big bomber aeroplane. You didn’t make this kind of a steep turn—you
might almost cal it an acrobatic manoeuvre—
and the big aircraft didn’t do these
things. However, we refined it, we learned how to do it. It ha d been decided earlier
that there was a possibility that an accident could occur on t ake-off, and so
therefore we would not arm this weapon until we had left th e runway and were out
to sea. This of course meant that had there been an acciden t there would have been
an explosion from normal powder charges but there would n ot have been a nuclear
explosion. As I said this worried more people than it worried me because I had
plenty of faith in my aeroplane. I knew my engines were goo d. We started our take-
off on time which was somewhere about two-forty-
five I think, and the aeroplane
went on down the runway. It was loaded quite heavily but it

responded exactly like I
had anticipated it would. I had flown this aeroplane the sam
e way before and there
was no problem and there was nothing different this night in
the way we went. We
arrived over the initial point and started in on the bomb run
which had about eleven
minutes to go, rather a long type of run for a bomb but on t
he other hand we felt we
needed this extra time in straight and level flight to stabilize
the air speed of the
aeroplane, to get everything right down to the last-
minute detail. As I indicated
earlier the problem after the release of the bomb is not to pr
oceed forward but to
turn away. As soon as the weight had left the aeroplane I im
mediately went into this
steep turn and we tried then to place distance between ours
elves and the point of
impact. In this particular case that bomb took fifty-
three seconds from the time it
left the aeroplane until it exploded and this gave us adequat
e time of course to make
the turn. We had just made the turn and rol ed out on level f
light when it seemed
like somebody had grabbed a hold of my aeroplane and gav
e it a real hard shaking
because this was the shock wave that had come up. Now aft
er we had been hit by a
second shock wave not quite so strong as the first one I deci
ded we'l turn around
and go back and take a look. The day was clear when we dr
opped that bomb, it was
a clear sunshiny day and the visibility was unrestricted. As
we came back around

again facing the direction of Hiroshima we saw this cloud co ming up. The cloud by

again facing the direction of Hiroshima we saw this cloud co ming up. The cloud by
this time, now two minutes old, was up at our altitude. We w ere 33,000 feet at this
time and the cloud was up there and continuing to go right on up in a boiling
fashion, as if it was rol ing and boiling. The surface was noth ing but a black boiling,
like a barrel of tar. Where before there had been a city with distinctive houses,
buildings and everything that you could see from our altitud e, now you couldn’t see
anything except a black boiling debris down below.

From Mark Arnold Foster, The World of War (London: Wil iam Col ins and Sons, Thomas Television Ltd. 1973), 348–49.

DR. TATSUICHIRO AKIZUKI

During the morning Mr Yokota turned up to see his daughter, who was one of our in-
patients. He lived at the foot of Motohara Hil , and was an e ngineer in the
research department of the Mitsubishi Ordnance Factory, th en one of the centres of
armament manufacture in Japan. The torpedoes used in the attack on Pearl Harbor
had been made there. Mr Yokota always had something inter esting to say. He used
to visit me now and again, often passing on some new piece of scientific information.

He said: ‘I hear Hiroshima was very badly damaged on the si xth.’

Together we despaired over the destiny of Japan, he as an e ngineer, I as a doctor.

Then he said gloomily: ‘I don’t think the explosion was cause d by any form of chemical energy.’

‘What then?’ I inquired, eager to know about the cause of th e explosion, even though my patients were waiting for me.

He said: ‘The power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima is fa r stronger than any
accumulation of chemical energy produced by the dissolutio n of a nitrogen compound, such as nitro-
glycerine. It was an atomic bomb, produced by atomic fission.’

‘Good heavens! At last we have atomic fission!’ I said, thoug h somewhat doubtful y.

Just then the long continuous wail of a siren arose.

‘Listen…. Here comes the regular air-raid.’

‘The first warning. … The enemy are on their way.’…

About thirty minutes later the al -
clear sounded. I said to myself: In Nagasaki
everything is stil al right….

From Tatsuichiro Akizuki, Nagasaki 1945, trans. Kei chi Naga ta (New York: Quartet Books, 1981), 23–24, 25, 26–27, 29–31, 33. © 1981 Tatsuichiro Akizuki & Kei chi
Nagata. Reprinted by permission of the Peters Fraser and Du nlop Group Limited.

I went down to the consulting room, humming cheerful y....

I stuck the pneumo-
thorax needle into the side of the chest of the patient lying on the bed. It was just after eleven a.m.

I heard a low droning sound, like that of distant aeroplane e ngines.

‘What’s that?’ I said. ‘The al -clear has gone, hasn’t it?’

At the same time the sound of the plane’s engines, growing louder and louder, seemed to swoop down over the hospital.

I shouted: ‘It’s an enemy plane! Look out—take cover!’

As I said so, I pul ed the needle out of the patient and threw myself beside the bed.

There was a blinding white flash of light, and the next mome nt—Bang! Crack! A
huge impact like a gigantic blow smote down upon our bodi es, our heads and our hospital. I lay flat—
I didn’t know whether or not of my own volition. Then down came piles of debris, slamming into my back.

The hospital has been hit, I thought. I grew dizzy, and my ea rs sang.

Some minutes or so must have passed before I staggered to my feet and looked
around. The air was heavy with yel ow smoke; white flakes o f powder drifted about; it was strangely dark.

Thank God, I thought—
I’m not hurt! But what about the patients?...

No one knew what had happened. A huge force had been rel eased above our
heads. What it was, nobody knew. Had it been several tons of bombs, or the suicidal
destruction of a plane carrying a heavy bomb-load?

Dazed, I retreated into the consulting room, in which the onl y upright object on the rubbish-
strewn floor was my desk. I went and sat on it and looked ou t of the
window at the yard and the outside world. There was not a s ingle pane of glass in the window, not even a frame—
al had been completely blown away. Out in the yard dun-colored smoke or dust cleared little by little. I saw figures ru nning. Then,
looking to the southwest, I was stunned. The sky was as dar k as pitch, covered with
dense clouds of smoke; under that blackness, over the earth , hung a yel ow-brown
fog. Gradual y the veiled ground became visible, and the vie w beyond rooted me to the spot with horror.

Al the buildings I could see were on fire: large ones and sm al ones and those with straw-
thatched roofs. Further off along the val ey, Urakami Church, the largest
Catholic church in the east, was ablaze. The technical school , a large two-storeyed
wooden building, was on fire, as were many houses and the distant ordnance
factory. Electricity poles were wrapped in flame like so many pieces of kindling.

Trees on the nearby hil s were smoking, as were the leaves of sweet potatoes in the
fields. To say that everything burned is not enough. It seeme

d as if the earth itself
emitted fire and smoke, flames that writhed up and erupted from underground. The
sky was dark, the ground was scarlet, and in between hung clouds of yel owish smoke. Three kinds of colour—
black, yel ow and scarlet—loomed ominously over
the people, who ran about like so many ants seeking to esca pe. What had happened?

Urakami Hospital had not been bombed—
I understood that much. But that ocean of
fire, that sky of smoke! It seemed like the end of the world.
…

About ten minutes after the explosion, a big man, half-naked, holding his head
between his hands, came into the yard towards me, making sounds that seemed to
be dragged from the pit of his stomach.

‘Got hurt, sir,’ he groaned; he shivered as if he were cold. ‘I’ m hurt.’

I stared at him, at the strange-
looking man. Then I saw it was Mr Zenjiro
Tsujimoto, a market-
gardener and a friendly neighbour to me and the hospital. I wondered what had happened to the robust Zenjiro.

‘What’s the matter with you, Tsujimoto?’ I asked him, holdin g him in my arms.

‘In the pumpkin field over there—
getting pumpkins for the patients—got hurt …’

he said, speaking brokenly and breathing feebly.

It was al he could do to keep standing. Yet it didn’t occur to me that he had been seriously injured.

‘Come along now,’ I said. ‘You are perfectly al right, I assure you. Where’s your
shirt? Lie down and rest somewhere where it’s cool. I’l be wi th you in a moment.’

His head and his face were whitish; his hair was singed. It w as because his
eyelashes had been scorched away that he seemed so blear y-eyed. He was half-naked
because his shirt had been burned from his back in a single flash. But I wasn’t aware
of such facts. I gazed at him as he reeled about with his hea d between his hands.

What a change had come over this man who was stronger t han a horse, whom I had
last seen earlier that morning. It’s as if he’s been struck by li ghtning, I thought.

After Mr Tsujimoto came staggering up to me, another perso n who looked just
like him wandered into the yard. Who he was and where he had come from I had no
idea. ‘Help me,’ he said, groaning, half-
naked, holding his head between his hands.

He sat down, exhausted. ‘Water… Water …’ he whispered.

‘What’s the trouble? What’s wrong with you? What’s becom e of your shirt?’ I demanded.

‘Hot-
hot … Water… I’m burning.’ They were the only words that were articulate.

As time passed, more and more people in a similar plight ca
me up to the hospital

—
ten minutes, twenty minutes, an hour after the explosion. Al
were of the same
appearance, sounded the same. ‘I’m hurt, hurt! I’m burning!
Water!’ They al
moaned the same lament. I shuddered. Half-
naked or stark naked, they walked with
strange, slow steps, groaning from deep inside themselves a
s if they had travel ed
from the depths of hel . They looked whitish; their faces wer
e like masks. I felt as if I
were dreaming, watching pal id ghosts processing slowly in
one direction—as in a
dream I had once dreamt in my childhood.

These ghosts came on foot uphil towards the hospital, from
the direction of the
burning city and from the more easterly ordnance factory. W
orker or student, girl or
man, they al walked slowly and had the same mask-
like face. Each one groaned and
cried for help. Their cries grew in strength as the people incr
eased in number,
sounding like something from the Buddhist scriptures, re-
echoing everywhere, as if the earth itself were in pain.

One victim who managed to reach the hospital yard asked
me, ‘Is this a hospital?’

before suddenly col apsing on the ground. There were those
who lay stiffly where
they fel by the roadside in front of the hospital; others lay i
n the sweet-potato

fields. Many went down to the steep val ey below the hospit al where a stream ran
down between the hil of Motohara and the next hil . ‘Water, water,’ they cried. They
went instinctively down to the banks of the stream, because their bodies had been
scorched and their throats were parched and inflamed; they were thirsty. I didn’t
realize then that these were the symptoms of ‘flash-burn.’…

In the afternoon a change was noticeable in the appearance of the injured people
who came up to the hospital. The crowd of ghosts which had looked whitish in the
morning were now burned black. Their hair was burnt; their skin, which was charred
and blackened, blistered and peeled. Such were those who n ow came toiling up to
the hospital yard and fel there weakly.

‘Are you a doctor? Please, if you wouldn’t mind, could you e xamine me?’ So said a young man.

‘Cheer up!’ I said. It was al I could say.

He died in the night. He must have been one of the many m edical students who
were injured down at the medical col ege. His politeness and then his poor
blackened body lying dead on the concrete are things I shal never forget.

THE CONTROVERSY OVER MEMORY: JOHN DOWER

This account was written by a historian specializing in intern ational relations and
Japan. It describes the controversy that arose over the propo

sed Smithsonian
commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the bomb in 1
995. A host of groups,
spearheaded by several veterans' organizations, attacked th
e original plans, which
had been prepared by a variety of historians and other expe
rts. The opposition,
echoed in a Congress dominated by conservatives, prompte
d the museum to back
down and offer a minimal display centered around the airpla
ne Enola Gay itself.

This decision brought another set of protests, including critic
isms from Japanese
authorities who felt that the United States was adopting a d
ouble standard: real
confrontation with historical issues for others, congratulator
y history for itself.

• • •

From John W. Dower, "Triumphal and Tragic Narratives of the
War in Asia," Journal
of American History (December 1995): 1124–34.

REMEMBERING THE BOMB

Fiftieth anniversaries are unlike other commemorative occas
ions, especial y when
they are anniversaries of war. Participants in the events of a
half century ago are
stil alive to tel their emotional personal tales. Their oral his
tories confront the
skepticism and detachment of younger generations who hav
e no memories of the
war. Historians with access to materials that were previously

inaccessible (or simply
ignored) develop new perspectives on the dynamics and sig
nificance of what took
place. Politicians milk the stil palpable human connection b
etween past and present
for every possible drop of ideological elixir. History, memory,
scholarship, and
politics become entangled in intricate ways....

It is a measure of the impoverishment of our present-
day political climate in the
United States that Americans have been denied a rare oppor
tunity to use the fiftieth
anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to reflect more deepl
y about these
developments that changed our world forever. That opportu
nity was lost early this
year when the Smithsonian Institution, bowing to political pr
essure (including
unanimous condemnation by the United States Senate), agr
eed to scale back
drastical y a proposed major exhibition on the atomic bombs
and the end of the war
against Japan in its Air and Space Museum in Washington.

The exhibition initial y envisioned by the Smithsonian's cura
tors would have
taken viewers through a succession of rooms that introduce
d, in turn, the ferocity of
the last year of the war in Asia, the Manhattan Project and t
he unfolding imperatives
behind the United States decision to use the bombs against
Japan, the training and
preparation of the Enola Gay mission that dropped the first
bomb on Hiroshima
(with the fuselage of the Enola Gay as the centerpiece of th

e exhibition), the human
consequences of the bombs in the two target cities, and the nuclear legacy to the
postwar world. The draft script included occasional placards that concisely
summarized the “historical controversies” that have emerge d in scholarship and public discourse.

This ambitious proposal proved to be political y unacceptabl e. The Senate

This ambitious proposal proved to be political y unacceptabl e. The Senate
denounced the draft script as being “revisionist and offensiv e to many World War II
veterans.” Critics accused curators responsible for the draft of being “political y
correct” leftists and rarely hesitated to brand as “anti-American” anyone who
questioned the use of the bombs. Confronted by such critici sm, and by a
conservative Congress threatening to cut off federal funding to “liberal” projects in general, the Smithsonian—
like Japan fifty years earlier—surrendered
unconditional y. Visitors to the Air and Space Museum event ual y were offered only
a minimalist exhibition featuring the refurbished fuselage of the Enola Gay and a
brief tape and text explaining that this was the plane that dr opped the first atomic
bomb, fol owing which, nine days later, Japan surrendered. T he artifact, supporters
of this bare presentation declare, speaks for itself.

Artifacts do not in fact speak for themselves. Essential y the United States

government has chosen to commemorate the end of World War II in Asia by affirming that only one orthodox view is politically permissible. This orthodoxy amounts to a “heroic” narrative, and its contours are simple: The war in Asia was a brutal struggle against a fanatic, expansionist foe (which is true, albeit cavalier about European and American colonial and neocolonial control in Asia up to 1941).

That righteous war against Japanese aggression was ended by the dropping of the atomic bombs, which saved the enormous numbers of American lives that would have been sacrificed in invading Japan. As the Senate’s condemnation of the Smithsonian’s plans put it, the atomic bombs brought the war to a “merciful” end.

… The triumphal American narrative offers an entirely understandable view of World War II—emphasizing the enormity of German and Japanese behavior, eulogizing American “valor and sacrificial service” (in the words of the Senate resolution), and applauding the bombs for forcing Japan’s surrender and saving American lives.

But what does this heroic narrative leave out? What are the “historical controversies” the Smithsonian’s curators thought worth making known to the public? What might we have learned from a truly serious commemorative engagement with the end of the war in Asia?

There are many answers. To begin, the argument that the b
ombs were used simply
to end the war quickly and thereby save untold lives neglect
s complicating facts,
converging motives and imperatives, and possible alternativ
e policies for ending the
war. Such considerations can do more than deepen our retro
spective understanding
of the decision to use the bombs. They also can help us bett
er appreciate the
complexities of crisis policy making in general.

If, moreover, we are wil ing to look beyond the usual end poi
nt in the conventional heroic narrative—
beyond (or beneath) the sparkling Enola Gay and the
almost abstract mushroom cloud—
we can encounter the human face of World War
II. Humanizing the civilians kil ed and injured by the bombs,
and, indeed,
humanizing the Japanese enemy general y, is difficult and di
stasteful for most
Americans. If this is done honestly in the context of Hiroshi
ma and Nagasaki, it
becomes apparent that we confront something more than th
e human consequences
of nuclear war. We are forced to ask painful questions about
the morality of modern war itself—
specifical y, the transformation of moral consciousness that,
 wel before
the atomic bombs were dropped, had led al combatants to i
dentify civilian men,
women, and children as a legitimate target of “total war.”

To engage the war at this level is to enter the realm of tragic
, rather than

triumphal, narratives. As the Smithsonian controversy reveal ed, however, even after

triumphal, narratives. As the Smithsonian controversy reveal ed, however, even after
the passage of a half century there is little tolerance of such reflection in the United
States, and now virtual y none at al at the level of public ins titutions. We have engaged in self-
censorship and are the poorer for it.

… Critics of the Air and Space Museum’s early scripts emph asized what was missing in them—
most notably, a vivid sense of the fanaticism, ferocity, and atrocious war conduct of the Japanese enemy. This was a fai r criticism. Using the
same criteria, it also is fair to ask what the heroic American narrative of the end of the war neglects.

At the simplest level, the popular triumphal narrative tends t o neglect events and
developments that are deemed important in the scholarly lit erature on the bombs.

The entry of the Soviet Union into the war against Japan on August 8, two days
after the bombing of Hiroshima, for example, tends to be do wnplayed or entirely ignored—
and with it the fact that the American leadership had solicite d the Soviet
entry from an early date, knew it was imminent, and knew t he Japanese were
terrified by the prospect. Why the haste to drop the bombs before the effect of the Soviet entry could be gauged?

The nuclear devastation of Nagasaki on August 9 is similarly marginalized in the orthodox narrative. What are we to make of this second bomb? Why was it dropped before Japan's high command had a chance to assess Hiroshima and the Soviet entry? How should we respond to the position taken by some Japanese—namely, that the bombing of Hiroshima may have been necessary to crack the no-surrender policy of the militarists, but the bombing of Nagasaki was plainly and simply a war crime....

Shortly after the end of the war, United States intelligence experts themselves publicly concluded that Japan was already at the end of its tether when the bombs were dropped.... [This raises] pertinent questions about the nature and shortcoming of wartime Allied intelligence evaluations of the enemy.

It also became known after Japan's surrender that alternatives to using the bombs on civilian targets had been broached in American official circles. Navy planners believed that Japan could be brought to its knees by intensified economic strangulation (the country's merchant marine and most of its navy had been sunk by 1945). Within the Manhattan Project, the possibility of dropping the bomb on a noncombat "demonstration" target, with Japanese observers present, had been broached but rejected. Conservative officials such as Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew, the former ambassador to Japan, argued that t

he Japanese could be
persuaded to surrender if the United States abandoned its p
olicy of “unconditional
surrender” and guaranteed the future existence of the empe
ror system.…

These developments complicate the simple story line of the
heroic narrative.

Greater complication, however, arises from the fact that dec
lassification of the
archival record has made historians aware of how many diff
erent considerations
officials in Washington had in mind when they formulated nu
clear policy in the
summer of 1945. No one denies that these policy makers de
sired to hasten the war’s
end and to save American lives, but no serious historian reg
ards those as the sole
considerations driving the use of the bombs on Japanese citi
es.

Although the initial Anglo-
American commitment to build nuclear weapons was
motivated by fear that Nazi Germany might be engaged in s
uch a project, it is now
known that by 1943,… United States planners had identified
 Japan as the prime target for such a weapon.…

Sheer visceral hatred abetted this early targeting of Japan fo
r nuclear destruction.

Although critics of the Smithsonian’s original script took um
brage at a passing
statement that cal ed attention to the element of vengeance
 in the American haste to

use the bombs, few historians (or honest participants) would discount this.

“Remember Pearl Harbor—
Keep ’em Dying” was a popular military slogan from the outset of the war, and among commentators and war correspondents at the time, it
was a commonplace that the Japanese were vastly more despised than the Germans.

As we know al too wel from our vantage place fifty years later, race and ethnicity
are hardly negligible factors in the kil ing game….

… In Japan, as might be expected, popular memory of the atomic bombs tends to
begin where the American narrative leaves off. In the heroic narrative, one rides
with the crew of the Enola Gay, cuts away from the scene the moment the Little Boy
bomb is released, gazes back from a great distance (over eleven miles) at a towering,
iridescent mushroom cloud. If by chance one does glance beneath the cloud, it is the
bomb’s awesome physical destructiveness that usual y is emphasized. Rubble
everywhere. A silent, shattered cityscape. In this regard, the heroic narrative differs little from a Hol ywood script.

By contrast, conventional Japanese accounts begin with the solitary bomber and
its two escort planes in the azure sky above Hiroshima, with the blinding flash
(pika) and tremendous blast (don) of the nuclear explosion, with the great pil ar of smoke—
and then move directly to ground zero. They dwel with excr

uciating detail
on the great and macabre human suffering the new weapon caused, which continues
to the present day for some survivors.

This Japanese perception of the significance of Hiroshima an d Nagasaki can
become maudlin and nationalistic. The nuclear destruction o f the two cities is easily
turned into a “victimization” narrative, in which the bombs f al from the heavens without historical context—
as if the war began on August 6, 1945, and innocent
Japan bore the cross of bearing witness to the horrendous bi rth of the nuclear age.

In this subjective narrative, the bombs become the symbolic stigmata of unique Japanese suffering.

It is virtual y a mantra in the United States media that what the Japanese real y
suffer from is historical amnesia. They cannot honestly confr ont their World War II
past, it is said, and there are indeed numerous concrete il us trations of this beyond
fixation on the misery caused by the atomic bombs. These r ange from sanitized
textbooks to virtual y routinized public denials of Japanese a ggression and atrocity
by conservative politicians (usual y associated with the Liber al Democratic party,
the United States government’s longtime protégé) to the go vernment’s failure, until
very recently, to offer an unequivocal apology to Asian and Al ied victims of imperial Japan’s wartime conduct.

In actuality, however, popular Japanese discourse concernin g both war
responsibility and the experience of the atomic bomb is mor e diversified than
usual y is appreciated outside Japan. Since the early 1970s, when Japan belatedly
established relations with the People’s Republic of China, th e Japanese media have
devoted conspicuous attention not only to exposing Japanes e war crimes in Asia but
also to wrestling with the complex idea that victims (bigaish a) can simultaneously be victimizers (kagaisha)….

Other Japanese have introduced other moral considerations in attempting to
come to grips with the meaning of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Some see the bombs as a plain atrocity—
an American war crime, as it were, that cancels out, or at le ast

a plain atrocity—
an American war crime, as it were, that cancels out, or at le ast
mitigates, the enormity of Japan’s own wartime transgressio ns. More typical y, however—
and this was true even in the immediate aftermath of the bo mbings—anti-
American sentiment per se is surprisingly muted. The focus i nstead has been on
using the bomb experience to bring an antinuclear message to the world….

Moral reflections of this sort—
by Japanese or by critics of the use of the bombs in general —
usual y are given short shrift by American upholders of the h

eroic
narrative. In their view, war is hel , the Japanese brought the terrible denouement of
the bombs upon themselves, and the only morality worth e mphasizing is the moral
superiority of the Al ied cause in World War II. Indeed, one of the formulaic terms
that emerged among critics of the Air and Space Museum's original plans (alongside
the "merciful" nature of the use of the bombs) labeled the n uclear destruction of the
two Japanese cities "moral y unambiguous."

It was not, and it may wel be that the most enduring legacy of the Smithsonian
controversy wil be its graphic exposure of the moral ambigu ity of the use of the bombs—
and of Al ied strategic bombing policy more general y. Here i s where the
triumphal story line gives way to a tragic narrative. The "go od war" against Axis
aggression and atrocity was brought to an end by a policy th at the United States,
Great Britain, and the League of Nations al had condemned only a few years
previous, when first practiced by Japan and Germany, as "ba rbarous" and "in
violation of those standards of humane conduct which have been developed as an
essential part of modern civilization." That policy was the id entification of civilian
men, women, and children as legitimate targets of aerial bo mbardment. The United
States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt typical y declared in 1940, could be proud
that it "consistently has taken the lead in urging that this in

human practice be
prohibited.” Five years later, wel before Hiroshima and Nag
asaki, this inhuman
practice was standard United States operating procedure.…

Nothing brought this to life more succinctly than the juxtapo
sition of the Superfortress and the lunch box.

Among artifacts the Smithsonian’s curators proposed bringi
ng to Washington
from the Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima was a seven
th-grade schoolgirl’s
charred lunch box, containing carbonized rice and peas, that
 had been recovered
from the ashes. The girl herself had disappeared. In the Japa
nese milieu, this is a
typical, intensely human atomic bomb icon; and to America
n visitors to an
exhibition, it would be intensely human too. This pathetic art
ifact (and other items
like it) obsessed and alarmed critics of the proposed exhibiti
on, and for obvious
reasons: for the little lunch box far outweighed the glistenin
g Superfortress in the
preceding room. It would linger longer in most visitors’ mem
ories. Inevitably, it
would force them to try imagining an incinerated child. Mus
eum visitors who could
gaze on this plain, intimate item and stil maintain that the u
se of the bombs was

“moral y unambiguous” would be a distinct minority.

This sense of the tragedy of the war, even of the “good war”
 against an atrocious
Axis enemy, became lost in the polemics that engulfed the S

mithsonian. Yet it is not
an original perception, certainly not new to the more civilize d discourse on the
bombs that has taken place in previous years. Indeed, in obl ique ways even President
Harry S Truman, a hero of the triumphal narrative, showed h imself sensitive to the
tragic dimensions of his decision to use the bombs. The day after Nagasaki was
bombed, he expressed qualms about kil ing “al those kids.”

CHAPTER 31

THE SPREAD OF DEMOCRACY AT THE END OF THE CENTURY

China, Africa, and the Middle East

During the decades after World War II, political systems in th e world seemed divided
among multiparty democracies (the West, India, Japan), Co mmunist systems, and
authoritarian regimes (see chapter 26). Many new nations, i n Africa and elsewhere,
initial y tried democracy but then turned to military or one- man rule, if only
because of huge internal divisions within their countries. De mocratic ideals
remained lively in areas such as Latin America and Africa, b ut their prospects often seemed bleak.

Beginning in the late 1970s, democracy began to spread. W estern encouragement
combined with a sense that democracy might be the best sy stem to foster economic growth, an alternative to heavy- handed state planning. Democratic systems gained
throughout Latin America and then in the former Communist

zone of Eastern
Europe. The Soviet Union sponsored more open political acti vity in 1985, and the
col apse of the Soviet empire after 1989 brought democratic systems to most of the
East European states. In several non-
Communist Asian states, such as South Korea
and the Philippines, authoritarian regimes were replaced by more democratic
governments. By the early 1990s democratic reforms were s preading in Africa,
though stil as a minority current. The establishment of dem ocracy in South Africa,
where the black majority had previously been excluded from voting as part of the
racist apartheid system, was a huge achievement. In 1994 N elson Mandela became
that nation’s first democratical y elected president.

The late-twentieth-
century spread of democracy thus involved both situations i n
which the majority of the people obtained the vote for the fir st time—the South African case—
and situations where free elections, with open political discu ssion and
choices among parties, replaced control ed voting systems —the more common ex-authoritarian or ex-Communist case.

Comparing democratic movements in areas where ful demo cracy had not
previously prevailed raises a number of analytical issues. Th e first involves
causation: why, in places otherwise so different, did democr acy begin to provide a
more popular, acceptable political vocabulary? Do statemen

ts about democracy help
get at the general, global conditions that gave this particula
r political system an
edge in the final decades of the century?

Comparison also involves the usual, essential task of close a
nalysis. Not al
democratic movements were necessarily the same. Some d
oubtless reflected different
contexts and traditions. Some may have been primarily for s
how, to win
international approval and support without real commitment
.

Comparison is even more obviously essential in dealing with
 global exceptions to
the democratic current. Democratic sentiment increased in
China during this period,
but the regime vowed to maintain a single-
party, political y Communist system.

The Middle East was another region where the surge toward
democracy was halting. Israel was a wel -
established democracy, though with a long history of
repressing the large Palestinian (Arab) minority. Turkey and
a few other Muslim
nations were democratic or made new gestures toward dem
ocracy, but in general

nations were democratic or made new gestures toward dem
ocracy, but in general
Islam and democracy did not readily coincide at this point. R
oyal, military, or one-
party rule was more common. Yet there were reasons for so
me new bows to
democracy in this context, given the larger global patterns.

The collapse of European Communism, and the U.S. invasion of Iraq at the end of the Cold War, made the West a more important player in Middle Eastern affairs, a fact that could generate more democratic influence.

The selections in this chapter come from three specific cases, all involving advances of democratic sentiment. Two of the cases—China and the Middle East—

also involve some of the more resistant contexts. Comparison can thus highlight (1) assessment of the democratic phenomenon in general at this time period, (2) the search for general factors of causation, and (3) a juxtaposition of cases in which democracy surged forward (South Africa), gained ground amid inconclusive results (the Middle East), or had to yield to overwhelming repression even as economic conditions and the informal political climate changed rapidly (China).

China had no deep democratic tradition. Confucianism, its dominant political culture, was strongly hierarchical. The Chinese revolution of 1911 was led by Western-style reformers who hoped to install a democratic system, though their own movement, pressed by internal disarray and Japanese attack, turned increasingly authoritarian. Chinese Communists themselves moved to reform in 1978, but mainly in the economic sphere. A democratic surge crested in 1989, however, with a series

of demonstrations in major cities, including the capital, Beiji ng. The state cracked
down, dispersing the demonstrators and arresting or exiling key leaders.

The African National Congress struggled against South Afric a's rigid racial
inequality, the apartheid system. By the 1980s international opposition to the South
African regime was growing, as was internal resistance, pun ctuated by periodic riots
and other acts of disobedience. Government repression stiff ened in the 1980s, with
many arrests, but in 1990 a new white leadership began to offer concessions. Nelson
Mandela, who headed negotiations for the black majority, ha d himself been a political prisoner for many years.

Israel gained independence as a Jewish state in 1948. For de cades Jewish settlers,
many of them nationalists, had been entering this historic te rritory, which was
dominated by Arab settlers and held as a mandate territory (essential y, a colony) by
Britain. Arab guerril a action continued in subsequent years, amid Arabs who
remained in Israel as wel as those in neighboring states. In 1964 the dissident Arabs
formed the Palestinian Liberation Organization. The PLO con tinual y vowed to
destroy Israel and emphasized terrorist attacks. But there w ere other tactics as wel ,
and in the late 1980s efforts to appeal to world opinion help ed prompt PLO leaders
to deemphasize terrorism in favor of broader political claims —including attacks on

the Israeli state as fascist. By the mid-
1990s negotiations with Israel, strongly backed
by the United States and West European powers, led to som
e compromise.

Autonomous (but not independent) Palestinian territories we
re established within
Israel, and the PLO took over their government with a pledg
e to set up a democracy.

Questions

1. What were the main arguments of the Chinese democrats ? Why did some
advocates anticipate difficulties in meshing democracy with Chinese traditions and current conditions?

2. Why did democracy provide a useful vocabulary in attack s on South Africa's racist regime?

3. Do the African and Chinese statements display the same basic definition of
democracy? What factors might explain any differences?

4. Is the PLO declaration democratic? What factors might ex plain some PLO

hesitation about ful commitment to democracy? Are actual democratic procedures suggested?

5. What causes for increased global interest in democracy d o the selections col ectively suggest?

6. What differences were there in the definition and precisio n of democratic
commitment among the Chinese students, Nelson Mandela, and the PLO?

7. What different world patterns favored or impeded democr acy at the end of the twentieth century?

For Further Discussion

1. What is a viable definition of democracy that fits global, a nd not just Western, conditions?

2. Is democracy an easy system to establish in areas that la ck explicit democratic
precedents? What kinds of conditions in the late twentieth c entury most favor the instal ation of new democracies?

3. Why, by the late 1980s and the 1990s, was Africa more fri endly to the instal ation
of new democracies than China or the Middle East?

4. Did Palestinian ideas about democracy reflect Muslim poli tical traditions (see
chapter 7), or was this a more purely secular movement?

5. Do you think democracy wil spread further—
for example, to China?

CHINESE DEMOCRATIC DISSIDENTS: HAN MINZHU

The fol owing passages were col ected and issued by an ano nymous 1989 dissident
who used the Chinese words for “Han democracy” as his pse udonym (Han being
China’s dominant ethnic group). After the government crack down, publishing
prodemocratic materials was extremely dangerous, though t here was a
postrepression flurry of such writings; some activists, includi ng dissidents now in exile, have continued such efforts.

• • •

From a 1989 Poster at the People’s University

… The government is facing bankruptcy. It has no money for education, no money
for national defense, no money for energy, no money for tra nsportation. It does not

even have enough money to keep the living standard of ordi
nary state employees up
to previous levels. Where has al the money gone? It has go
ne into the pockets of the
corrupt officials, into the banking accounts of those big and
smal leaders who enjoy
authority. The smal amount of capital people have toiled to
create has turned into Mercedes Benzes and Cadil acs—
cars on the streets—and into hotels and restaurants

[where these big and smal leaders dine, stay, and entertain
their relatives and friends for free]....

Political corruption is the key problem [facing China]. The on
ly weapon for
smashing dictatorship and autocracy and ending al types of
corruption that plague
China is democracy. The power [presently] concentrated in i
ndividuals and a smal
portion of the people must be restricted; there must be som
e mechanism of checks

portion of the people must be restricted; there must be som
e mechanism of checks
and balances. The most basic meaning of democracy is that
people themselves
administer matters. In modern countries, direct democracy i
s not easy to implement;
therefore, it is transformed into indirect democracy, that is,
people entrust part of
their power to others, and these people so entrusted are sel
ected by the people. Since
people are concerned that the people entrusted by them ma
y abuse their power, they
establish several institutions that counterbalance each other
, and each institution is

independently responsible to the people. This is the basic principle of democracy.

From Han Minzhu, ed., Cries for Democracy: Writings and Speeches from the 1989

Chinese Democracy Movement (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), 33–35, 72, 291–
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What does China have? Nothing. On hearing [cal s] for democracy, the
government says that the level of the people is too low for the implementation of
democracy. But they have forgotten that when Chiang Kai-shek [the head of the
Nationalist Party] ran the country under a dictatorship, one of his rationales was
that the people were unenlightened and that they needed “instructive politics.” When
the Communist Party was fighting Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist Party, the
Party was eager to demand democracy. How can it be that the Chinese people are,
after forty years of communist leadership, stil in the same ignorant condition as they were under Chiang Kai-shek’s regime? If some old people over the age of fifty are unenlightened, this can be blamed on Chiang Kai-shek. But people under the age
of fifty were al born “under the red flag and raised under the red flag”! How can it
be that forty years of communist rule have produced a citizenship that is not even fit
for a democratic society? Is this self-contradictory? On the one hand, the party

boasts in its propaganda of forty years of achievements. On the other hand, it denies
those achievements [by denying that the people are ready f or democracy]. What
kind of logic is this? There is no way out for China if we do n ot have democracy now.

Of course, we do not expect to achieve a perfect and beautif ul democratic society
at once; after al , the Chinese people have not had a single day of a free life. The
dictatorship of thousands of years, particularly that of the la st several decades, has
made most people unable to adjust quickly to a democratic society. But this is no
excuse for not having a democracy. Certainly, at least urban citizens, intel ectuals,
and Communist Party members are as ready for democracy as any of the citizens
who already live in democratic societies. Thus, we should at least implement
complete democracy within the Communist Party and within the urban areas.

Furthermore, during the process of urbanization, we should see that people in those

[rapidly developing] rural areas become acquainted with de mocracy....

... Chinese intel ectuals stil possess aristocratic airs: even in the revolutions for
freedom and equality, they always give the impression of be longing to a class
superior to others. Everyone is born equal; this issue was re solved during the

Enlightenment. People’s level of education may be high or low, and their
contributions to society large or small , but they are all born as people and deserve
the same respect. They all have the same right to pursue a good life. Intellectuals
should not separate themselves from other classes and can not claim special rights
and interests. Intellectuals should be the spokesmen for the entire nation and the
vanguard of social justice. The achievements of this movement that has been
initiated by intellectuals will in the end be measured by the influence it has on the
people. We should put our efforts into thinking about the future of the Chinese
people. We should only be responsible to the people. Democracy and equality are

people. We should only be responsible to the people. Democracy and equality are
like Siamese twins; one cannot have one without the other.

China’s future rests on the shoulders of her one billion people. Only if we
implement widespread democracy and more flexible economic policies will China
have a way out. Democracy will check the hereditary system [that breeds
corruption]; limited privatization will accelerate the development of the economy;
freedom of speech and freedom of the press will provide effective supervision over
the government; and equality will unite people into a greater force. But none of this
will come to us: we must reach out and struggle for it.

Essay on a Banner in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, 1989

… We have never cast off the specter of authoritarianism wh
ich, either in the form
of naked tyranny or in the cloak of idealism, never ceases to
 hover above our heads,
sucking away the vitality of our nation and leaving our creati
vity sucked dry. Under
the authoritarian system, the leaden weights of totalitarian
politics and an unfree
economy have suppressed the talents and wisdom of this m
ost gifted people in the
world. Mired in this stagnation, our nation becomes poorer a
nd more backward with
each passing day. China can be saved only if our political sy
stem is fundamental y
transformed. Only democracy can save China. Our ancestor
s missed many
opportunities for cultural regeneration. We cannot afford to
miss another such opportunity.…

“There is never such a thing as a Savior.” Let those who thin
k themselves
intel igent for advocating “old” authoritarianism or “new” au
thoritarianism [realize
the impotence of their schemes] in the face of the people’s i
mmense power, and
crawl off to console themselves. The realization of democrac
y cannot be dependent
upon the benevolence of any person, as no dictator has eve
r shown a benevolent
heart. Receiving alms while sitting locked in a cage is not de
mocracy. Democracy
can only be obtained by the struggle of the people themselv
es. It’s nonsense to say
that “the people would not know how to exercise democratic

rights” or “democracy
is not suited to the national conditions.” Democracy has alw
ays been given to the
government by the people, and not the other way round.

Democracy is not a mystical concept; it is a concrete way of conducting your life.

It means that you can choose your own path in life. It means that you have the right
to improve your government, the right to express your thou
ghts freely, and the right
to write books and spread your beliefs. It means that every single person must abide
by the law, while at the same time each may use your intel i
gence to the ful est to
have a [bad] law rescinded. Under democracy, you can be fr
ee from the terror of a
government which acts without the least regard for human li
fe. In other words, if
democracy is trampled upon, then the dark shadows of auth
oritarianism wil be cast
into the life of every individual. In China, it has always been the case that the
officials are al owed to get away with arson while the people may not even light
their lamps. In China, no one has ever valued the individual —“a human life isn’t
worth a cent.” In China, no one has ever heeded the groans of the common people.

It’s about time, my fel ow Chinese! We do not want to live o
ur lives in this manner any more!…

It’s about time, my fel ow Chinese. Let us break our chains a
nd become free

human beings. Let us rise and free our country from the vici ous cycle of its history.

With the blood of our devotion let us light the torch of truth, and let it il uminate
this dark wilderness at this last moment before daybreak. Th e power of democracy is
like a spring tide bursting through a tiny opening—
once it starts coming there is no

like a spring tide bursting through a tiny opening—
once it starts coming there is no
way to counter its force. This is where the hearts of the peo ple lie. This is the march
of history. How then can we let this hope be stifled?

SOUTH AFRICA: NELSON MANDELA’S ADDRESS

This speech occurred on Nelson Mandela’s release from pris on, February 11, 1990.

• • •

Friends, comrades and fel ow South Africans.

I greet you al in the name of peace, democracy and freedo m for al .

I stand here before you not as a prophet but as a humble se rvant of you, the
people. Your tireless and heroic sacrifices have made it possi ble for me to be here
today. I therefore place the remaining years of my life in you r hands.

On this day of my release, I extend my sincere and warmest gratitude to the

mil ions of my compatriots and those in every corner of the globe who have campaigned tirelessly for my release....

I salute the African National Congress. It has fulfil ed our eve ry expectation in its
role as leader of the great march to freedom....

I greet the traditional leaders of our country—
many of you continue to walk in
the footsteaps of great heroes like Hintsa and Sekhukune.

I pay tribute to the endless heroism of youth, you, the young lions. You, the young
lions, have energized our entire struggle.

I pay tribute ot he mothers and wives and sisters of our nati on. You are the rock-
hard foundation of our struggle. Apartheid has inflicted mor e pain on you than on anyone else.

On this occasion, we thank the world community for their gr eat contribution to the anti-
apartheid struggle. Without your support our struggle would not have
reached this advanced stage. The sacrifice of the frontline st ates wil be remembered by South Africans forever....

From AWC Historical documents,

http://www.awc.org.2a/ancdocs/hisotry/mandela/1191/sp911 22a.html.

Today the majority of South Africans, black and white, recog nize that apartheid
has no future. It has to be ended by our own decisive mass action in order to build
peace and security. The mass campaign of defiance and oth

er actions of our
organization and people can only culminate in the establish ment of democracy. The
destruction caused by apartheid on our subcontinent is incal culable. The fabric of
family life of mil ions of my people has been shattered. Mil i ons are homeless and
unemployed. Our economy lies in ruins and our people are e mbroiled in political
strife. Our resort to the armed struggle in 1960 with the for mation of the military
wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe, was a purely defensiv e action against the
violence of apartheid. The factors which necessitated the ar med struggle stil exist
today. We have no option but to continue. We express the h ope that a climate
conducive to a negotiated settlement wil be created soon s o that there may no
longer be the need for the armed struggle....

There are further steps that have to be met before negotiati ons on the basic
demands of our people can begin. I reiterate our cal for, int er alia, the immediate
ending of the State of Emergency and the freeing of al , and not only some, political
prisoners. Only such a normalized situation, which al ows for free political activity,

prisoners. Only such a normalized situation, which al ows for free political activity,
can al ow us to consult our people in order to obtain a mand ate.

The people need to be consulted on who wil negotiate and on the content of such
negotiations. Negotiations cannot take place above the hea ds or behind the backs of
our people. It is our belief that the future of our country can only be determined by
a body which is democratical y elected on a non-
racial basis. Negotiations on the
dismantling of apartheid wil have to address the overwhelm ing demand of our people for a democratic, non-
racial and unitary South Africa. These also must be
political and economic systems to ensure that the inequaliti es of apartheid are
addressed and our society thoroughly democratized....

Our struggle has reached a decisive moment. We cal on our people to seize this
moment so that the process towards democracy is rapid and uninterrupted. We have
waited too long for our freedom. We can no longer wait. Now is the time to
intensify the struggle on al fronts. To relax our efforts now w ould be a mistake
which generations to come wil not be able to forgive. The si ght of freedom looming
on the horizon should encourage us to redouble our efforts.

It is only through disciplined mass action that our victory ca n be assured. We cal
on our white compatriots to join us in the shaping of a new S outh Africa. The
freedom movement is a political home for you too. We cal o n the international
community to continue the campaign to isolate the aparthei d regime. To lift

sanctions now would be to run the risk of aborting the proce ss towards the complete eradication of apartheid.

Our march to freedom is irreversible. We must not al ow fear to stand in our way.

Universal suffrage on a common voters' role in a united dem ocratic and non-racial
South Africa is the only way to peace and racial harmony.

THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION: PROCLAMATION , 1988

The 1988 declaration was part of an internal reshuffling with in this organization,
operating from headquarters in exile and vigorously opposin g Israeli policy. Using
democratic language, PLO leaders hailed negotiations with l eading (authoritarian)
Arab states like Syria and also insisted on purging certain le aders assigned to
regional responsibilities in the Gaza area (one of the areas h eavily populated by
Palestinians that is now part of the Palestinian autonomy ter ritory). The PLO also
refers to renewed agitation against Israel in its United Natio nal Command and seeks
to raise support among ordinary Palestinians.

• • •

O masses of our people

Forty years have passed since the expulsion of our people fr om its homeland and the
attempt to liquidate its existence and its national existence, but our valiant people is

stronger than the expulsion and the efforts to suppress its id
entity. Its national
revolution has succeeded, through the continuous processio
ns of martyrs and
victims, in thwarting those attempts and in gaining internati
onal recognition for its
legitimate national rights [and] for its exclusive representati
on by the PLO. In the
forefront of these rights is the right of return, self-
determination, and the
establishment of an independent national state under the le
adership of the PLO.

The achievements of the Palestinian revolution, the glory of
the magnificent
uprising which is entering its sixth month, are continuing tir
elessly and relentlessly.

When our people declared the uprising, it understood the sc
ale of the sacrifices that
would be required for liberation and independence.

Our people, who declared the uprising, is aware of the dime
nsions of the sacrifice
that wil be demanded of it on the road to national liberation
. The people
consciously pay the price for its aspirations in the form of vi
ctims, wounded,
detainees, and deportees. [It] grasps the nature of the enem
y with whom it is locked
in struggle, his barbarism and the actions of his fascist force
s, such as the use of
poison gas, bul ets, house demolitions, and a criminal war of
 starvation. Despite this,
our people has chosen the road of struggle and sacrifice as t
he only road through which to achieve its national rights.

Just as our people grasps the essence of the enemy, so it is also aware of the
character of the war it is waging. Our war is a lengthy one. It is a war of attrition in
which each passing day raises the economic and political pri ce paid by the occupier

[Israel], intensifies his international isolation, exposes the ug ly truth about the
occupation, and shatters the il usion of coexistence that the enemy has tried to
foster. Moreover, it reinforces our legitimate national rights.

From Shaul Mishal and Reuben Aharoni, Speaking Stones: Co mmuniqués from the
Intifada Underground (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Pr ess, 1994), 93–95.

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The glorious December uprising was launched to demonstra te the solid strength of
the fighting army and to raise the [people's] struggle and its national cause to a new
level of which the axis is the continuation of the struggle an d the resistance and
escalation of the confrontation toward civil disobedience.

The United National Command of the Uprising, as it pursues the struggle with you
and through you, under the banners of our sole legitimate re presentative, the PLO,
reaffirms our people's readiness for great sacrifices and dev otion, to move toward
civil disobedience, meaning primarily the liberation of our m asses from the

occupation and al that this entails: sacrifices and belt-tightening, storing basic
foodstuffs, storing medicines, suffering for the sake of the h omeland, and relentless
and tireless forbearance and determination. The United Com mand stresses the
determination of the uprising masses to remove al the obst acles on the road to civil
disobedience, involving especial y the resignation of al [the personnel in] the
mechanisms of the occupation such as the tax apparatus, th e police, and the appointed municipalities.

O our glorious masses,

1. The United National Command welcomes the removal of t he obstacles on the road to normalization of Palestinian-Syrian relations and on the road to perfection
of Palestinian national unity through a constructive democra tic dialogue. Marginal
disputes must not be encouraged. We must turn to democra tic dialogue as the only
means for settling internal disputes. [The United Command] condemns those who
deviate from the unity of our people and are splitting its ran ks....

2. The immediate resignation must be effected of departme nt directors in the Civil
Administration in Gaza.... Let there be no mistake: the mass es of the uprising and
the shock squads wil punish those who deviate from the wil of the people and the
decisions of its Command when they see fit.

3. Establishment of the popular committees and their disper sal in al areas must
be completed. There must be no delay in executing this stru ggle mission. The other
functional popular committees have the task of organizing t he inhabitants' lives and ensuring proper services—
food supplies, medicine, education, and security. For the popular committees are the government of the people and t he uprising, a substitute

popular committees are the government of the people and t he uprising, a substitute
for the col apsing occupation mechanisms, and a political to ol for introducing civil disobedience and making it succeed.

4. Beat vigorously policemen, col aborators, and members o f appointed municipal
councils who, by not resigning from the service of the enem y, deviate from the national consensus.

CHAPTER 32

ISSUES OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

Africa and Latin America

This chapter focuses on efforts by intel ectuals to define the position of their cultures

—one Nigerian, one Mexican—
in a period of rapid cultural change. Both areas had witnessed important cultural impositions by other societies, including Western
Europe and the United States. Both, however, retained prior cultural traditions and
an active desire to assert a distinctive identity. Identity issue s ride high on the

contemporary global agenda. How can societies handle new cultural forms, often brought through outside influences, and stil retain a link to t heir cultural roots?

The past hundred years have been a period of major cultural change, almost literal y worldwide. No culture retained al of the key assum ptions and values that had predominated in 1900. Yet the patterns of change were complex. In a number of societies, the strength of traditional religion weakened as it f aced competition from new beliefs such as nationalism, consumer materialism, or Marxism. But in certain cases new religious enthusiasms spread. Thus, in sub-Saharan Africa there were many conversions to Islam and Christianity: where 80 perce nt of the population was committed to some form of polytheism in 1900, only 20 perc ent retained primary commitment to polytheistic beliefs by the 1990s. Latin Amer ica, converted earlier to Catholicism (though often in combination with older America n Indian or African beliefs), saw a wave of enthusiasm for fundamentalist Prote stantism toward the end of the twentieth century. Several societies, final y, including Hindu-dominated India and the Islamic Middle East, experienced a surge of religious revival from the 1970s onward. Cultural change was the order of the day, but the o veral directions were far from clear.

One issue loomed large, though it was handled differently d epending on current

beliefs and past traditions: the influence of Western culture was a formidable force
for change. From the West many societies incorporated new political beliefs,
including aspects of representative democracy and, of cours e, nationalism. But the
most important pressures from the West involved the power of modern science and
the seductions of material acquisition (consumerism) and in dividual advancement.

Latin America and Africa faced particular pressures from out side cultural forces.

Many Latin Americans had long looked to Western Europe fo r cultural models,
beginning with Catholicism. Africa had more recently underg one Western
imperialism, leading to new systems of education, missionar y activity, and the
general force of consumerism. Neither society was cultural y ful y Western, because
of the diverse cultural groups that remained active and beca use of powerful prior
traditions; yet neither could easily rely on traditional values to define personal beliefs or larger identities.

Not surprisingly, intel ectuals in twentieth-
century Africa and Latin America
worried extensively about identity, particularly in relationshi p to Europe and the
United States. African writers, usual y educated in Western s chools and writing in
English or French, tried to deal with the need for a definable culture that would be
something more than derivative. Latin American thinkers, wi

th a longer tradition of
encountering Western influence but equal y preoccupied wit h defining values that
were both distinctive and appropriate to the modern world, used history and

were both distinctive and appropriate to the modern world, used history and
comparison to try to define the flavor of their cultures.

This chapter features selections from two novels by the lead ing Nigerian novelist,
Chinua Achebe, where he discusses successive phases of W estern influence on Africa, first Christian, then urban-consumer. Writing from the 1950s onward, Achebe was fascinated by the process of change, which he felt undermin ed a coherent traditional
culture but brought some undeniable benefits. The titles of h is novels, Things Fal
Apart and No Longer at Ease, suggest the confusions he beli eved change had created,
as Africans renounced older belief patterns without ful y clea r or valid substitutes.

Achebe’s characterizations should be considered along with African nationalist
views (chapter 25) and the views of African women (chapter 29), to widen the
picture of African culture in a century of varied change.

A second set of selections comes from an essay col ection b y the prizewinning
Mexican novelist and essayist, Octavio Paz, written initial y i n the 1950s and
supplemented in a 1970s edition. Paz attempts to define ess ential features of

Mexican culture, while comparing it with what he sees as th e culture of the United States, Mexico's powerful neighbor, and the more general fo rces of modern economic life. His impressions of cultural change differ from those of Achebe, but he grapples with some of the same issues of distinctive identity .

The passages below flow from the pens of intel ectuals. The y do not necessarily represent popular cultural beliefs, though they try to fathom popular values.

Interpreting the significance of the passages has to involve s ome thinking about the role of intel ectuals in modern life, in civilizations general y, and in Africa and Latin America in particular. Are the concerns of intel ectuals partic ularly significant or revealing? Comparisons remain important as wel . Africa an d Latin America faced the same cultural and identity issues. What are the most im portant differences?

Questions

1. What forces of change does Achebe deal with in his succe ssive novelistic
treatments of Nigeria? How do the shifts under Christian mis sionary influence,
around 1900, compare with those of urban Nigeria in the 19 20s, stil under British rule?

2. What kinds of people were most open to Western-
inspired cultures? What kinds
resisted most firmly? Does Achebe believe that a coherent n ew culture emerged?

3. Does Achebe believe that it would be better for Africa if tr aditional values could be restored?

4. Why does Paz argue that Mexicans seek a certain kind of solitude? How does he
define the major strengths of Mexican culture?

5. Does Paz believe that Mexican culture can accommodate to modern economic
and political life? On what basis does he criticize Western va lues?

6. Do Paz and Achebe define Western values in similar ways ?

7. What kinds of history have shaped Mexico, according to P az? Does he have the
same view of historical disruptions that Achebe highlights? I s his sense of the problem of modern identity the same?

8. Which author, Paz or Achebe, is more hostile to Western v alues? Which believes

that Western values are more threatening to established cul tural traditions?

9. How does Paz's characterization of modern worker culture , in its relationship to
prior Mexican values, compare with Achebe's description of urban standards in

prior Mexican values, compare with Achebe's description of urban standards in relation to earlier vil age beliefs?

For Further Discussion

1. Is Achebe an African nationalist? How might Mexican nati onalists disagree with Paz?

2. Did intel ectuals such as Achebe and Paz represent wides pread popular concerns
in their respective societies? Did their views relate at al to t he concerns expressed
by African and Mexican women (see chapter 29)?

3. Why were many twentieth-
century African and Latin American intel ectuals
particularly preoccupied with issues of cultural identity?

4. Wil Latin American and African cultures become increasin gly westernized in the
next few decades (and how do you define cultural westerniz ation)?

NIGERIA: CHINUA ACHEBE

Chinua Achebe, born in 1930, wrote a series of novels on th e impact of the West on
his native Nigeria, titling the first one Things Fal Apart (195 8). This novel was set

in the Ibo section of Nigeria around 1900, when Western missionary activity was increasing under the protection of British colonial rule. The passage describes the various reasons different Africans were drawn to Christianity or resisted it. Achebe is fascinated by the divisions among Africans in response to Western values and colonial controls.

The second selection comes from Achebe's novel No Longer at Ease; one of the characters is a descendant of the same Okonkwo family, from the same village, who had moved to Lagos (Nigeria's capital) in the 1920s. Here the impact of Western-style urban culture is explored, as it further jeopardized traditional values and behaviors. Obi Okonkwo was the first village member to have received higher education in British-run schools, and he later obtained a civil-service job.

• • •

THINGS FALL APART

The missionaries spent their first four or five nights in the marketplace, and went into the village in the morning to preach the gospel. They asked who the king of the village was, but the villagers told them that there was no king. "We have men of high title and the chief priests and the elders," they said.

It was not very easy getting the men of high title and the elders together after the excitement of the first day. But the missionaries persevered,

and in the end they were
received by the rulers of Mbanta. They asked for a plot of la
nd to build their church.

Every clan and vil age had its “evil forest.” In it were buried
al those who died of
the real y evil diseases, like leprosy and smal pox. It was als
o the dumping ground
for the potent fetishes of great medicine men when they die
d. An “evil forest” was,
therefore, alive with sinister forces and powers of darkness.
It was such a forest that
the rulers of Mbanta gave to the missionaries. They did not r
eal y want them in their
clan, and so they made them that offer which nobody in his
right sense would accept.

“They want a piece of land to build their shrine,” said Uchen
du to his peers when
they consulted among themselves. “We shal give them a pi
ece of land.” He paused,
and there was a murmur of surprise and disagreement. “Let
us give them a portion
of the Evil Forest. They boast about victory over death. Let u
s give them a real

of the Evil Forest. They boast about victory over death. Let u
s give them a real
battlefield in which to show their victory.” They laughed and
agreed, and sent for
the missionaries, whom they had asked to leave them for a
while so that they might

“whisper together.” They offered them as much as the Evil F
orest as they cared to

take. And to their greatest amazement the missionaries tha nked them and burst into song.

From Chinua Achebe, Things Fal Apart (London: Wil iam Hei nemann, 1959), 138–

41, 162, 163, 166–67, 186–
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“They do not understand,” said some of the elders. “But the y wil understand
when they go to their plot of land tomorrow morning.” And t hey dispersed.

The next morning the crazy men actual y began to clear a p art of the forest and
to build their house. The inhabitants of Mbanta expected the m al to be dead within
four days. The first day passed and the second and third an d fourth, and none of
them died. Everyone was puzzled. And then it became know n that the white man’s
fetish had unbelievable power. It was said that he wore glas ses on his eyes so that he
could see and talk to evil spirits. Not long after, he won his fi rst three converts.

Although Nwoye had been attracted to the new faith from th e very first day, he
kept it secret. He dared not go too near the missionaries for fear of his father. But
whenever they came to preach in the open marketplace or t he vil age playground,
Nwoye was there. And he was already beginning to know so me of the simple stories they told.

“We have now built a church,” said Mr. Kiaga, the interpreter, who was now in charge of the infant congregation. The white man had gone back to Umuofia, where he built his headquarters and from where he paid regular visits to Mr. Kiaga’s congregation at Mbanta.

“We have now built a church,” said Mr. Kiaga, “and we want you all to come in every seventh day to worship the true God.”

On the following Sunday, Nwoye passed and repassed the little red-earth and thatch building without summoning enough courage to enter. He heard the voice of singing and although it came from a handful of men it was loud and confident.

Their church stood on a circular clearing that looked like the open mouth of the Evil Forest. Was it waiting to snap its teeth together? After passing and repassing by the church, Nwoye returned home.

It was well known among the people of Mbanta that their gods and ancestors were sometimes long-suffering and would deliberately allow a man to go on defying them. But even in such cases they set their limit at seven market weeks or twenty-eight days. Beyond that limit no man was suffered to go. And so excitement mounted in the village as the seventh week approached since the impudent missionaries built their church in the Evil Forest. The villagers were so certain about

the doom that awaited these men that one or two converts t hought it wise to suspend their al egiance to the new faith.

At last the day came by which al the missionaries should ha ve died. But they were stil alive, building a new red-earth and thatch house for their teacher, Mr.

Kiaga. That week they won a handful more converts. And for the first time they had a woman. Her name was Nneka, the wife of Amadi, who was a prosperous farmer.

She was very heavy with child.

Nneka had had four previous pregnancies and childbirths. B ut each time she had

Nneka had had four previous pregnancies and childbirths. B ut each time she had
borne twins, and they had been immediately thrown away. H er husband and his family were already becoming highly critical of such a woma n and were not unduly perturbed when they found she had fled to join the Christian s. It was a good riddance....

“Does the white man understand our custom about land?”

“How can he when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says that our customs are bad; and our own brothers who have taken up his religion also say that our customs are bad. How do you think we can fight when o ur own brothers have turned against us? The white man is very clever. He came q uietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and al o

wed him to stay. Now
he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife
on the things that held us together and we have fal en apart .”...

There were many men and women in Umuofia who did not f eel as strongly as
Okonkwo a traditionalist leader about the new dispensation. The white man had
indeed brought a lunatic religion, but he had also built a tra ding store and for the first time palm-
oil and kernel became things of great price, and much mone y flowed into Umuofia....

Mr. Brown [the missionary to the Ibo vil age] learned a good deal about the
religion of the clan and he came to the conclusion that a fro ntal attack on it would
not succeed. And so he built a school and a little hospital in Umuofia. He went from
family to family begging people to send their children to his school. But at first they
only sent their slaves or sometimes their lazy children. Mr. B rown begged and
argued and prophesied. He said that the leaders of the land in the future would be
men and women who had learned to read and write. If Umu ofia failed to send her
children to the school, strangers would come from other pla ces to rule them. They
could already see that happening in the Native Court, where the D.C. was
surrounded by strangers who spoke his tongue. Most of thes e strangers came from

the distant town of Umuru on the bank of the Great River where the white man first went.

In the end Mr. Brown's arguments began to have an effect. More people came to learn in his school, and he encouraged them with gifts of singlets and towels. They were not all young, these people who came to learn. Some of them were thirty years old or more. They worked on their farms in the morning and went to school in the afternoon. And it was not long before the people began to say that the white man's medicine was quick in working. Mr. Brown's school produced quick results. A few months in it were enough to make one a court messenger or even a court clerk.

Those who stayed longer became teachers; and from Umuofia laborers went forth into the Lord's vineyard. New churches were established in the surrounding villages and a few schools with them. From the very beginning religion and education went hand in hand....

"You all know why we are here, when we ought to be building our barns or mending our huts, when we should be putting our compounds in order. My father used to say to me: 'Whenever you see a toad jumping in broad daylight, then know that something is after its life.' When I saw you all pouring into this meeting from all the quarters of our clan so early in the morning, I knew that something was after

our life.” He paused for a brief moment and then began agai
n:

“Al our gods are weeping. Idemili is weeping, Ogwugwu is w
eeping, Agbala is
weeping, and al the others. Our dead fathers are weeping b
ecause of the shameful
sacrilege they are suffering and the abomination we have al
 seen with our eyes.” He

sacrilege they are suffering and the abomination we have al
 seen with our eyes.” He
stopped again to steady his trembling voice.

“This is a great gathering. No clan can boast of greater num
bers or greater valor.

But are we al here? I ask you: Are al the sons of Umuofia wi
th us here?” A deep murmur swept through the crowd.

“They are not,” he said. “They have broken the clan and gon
e their several ways.

We who are here this morning have remained true to our fat
hers, but our brothers
have deserted us and joined a stranger to soil their fatherla
nd. If we fight the
stranger we shal hit our brothers and perhaps shed the bloo
d of a clansman. But we
must do it. Our fathers never dreamed of such a thing, they
 never kil ed their
brothers. But a white man never came to them. So we must
 do what our fathers
would never have done. Eneke the bird was asked why he w
as always on the wing
and he replied: ‘Men have learned to shoot without missing t
heir mark and I have

learned to fly without perching on a twig.’ We must root out this evil. And if our
brothers take the side of evil we must root them out too. An d we must do it now.

We must bale this water now that it is only ankle-deep….”

At this point there was a sudden stir in the crowd and every eye was turned in one
direction. There was a sharp bend in the road that led from t he marketplace to the
white man’s court, and to the stream beyond it. And so no o ne had seen the
approach of the five court messengers sent by English colon ial leaders until they had
come round the bend, a few paces from the edge of the cro wd. Okonkwo was sitting at the edge….

“What do you want here?”

“The white man whose power you know too wel has ordere d this meeting to stop.”

In a flash Okonkwo drew his machete. The messenger crouc hed to avoid the blow.

It was useless. Okonkwo’s machete descended twice and th e man’s head lay beside his uniformed body.

The waiting backcloth jumped into tumultuous life and the meeting was stopped.

Okonkwo stood looking at the dead man. He knew that Umu ofia would not go to
war. He knew because they had let the other messengers es cape. They had broken

into tumult instead of action. He discerned fright in that tum ult. He heard voices asking: “Why did he do it?”

He wiped his machete on the sand and went away.

NO LONGER AT EASE

As a boy in the vil age of Umuofia he had heard his first stori es about Lagos from a
soldier home on leave from the war. Those soldiers were her oes who had seen the
great world. They spoke of Abyssinia, Egypt, Palestine, Burm a and so on. Some of them had been vil age ne’er-do-
wel s, but now they were heroes. They had bags and
bags of money, and the vil agers sat at their feet to listen to their stories. One of
them went regularly to a market in the neighboring vil age a nd helped himself to
whatever he liked. He went in ful uniform, breaking the eart h with his boots, and
no one dared touch him. It was said that if you touched a sol dier, Government
would deal with you. Besides, soldiers were as strong as lion s because of the
injections they were given in the army. It was from one of th ese soldiers that Obi had his first picture of Lagos.

“There is no darkness there,” he told his admiring listeners, “because at night the
electric shines like the sun, and people are always walking a bout, that is, those who

electric shines like the sun, and people are always walking a bout, that is, those who
want to walk. If you don’t want to walk you only have to wav e your hand and a

pleasure car stops for you.” His audience made sounds of w onderment. Then by way
of digression he said: “If you see a white man, take off your hat for him. The only
thing he cannot do is mold a human being.”

For many years afterwards, Lagos was always associated wit h electric lights and
motorcars in Obi’s mind. Even after he had at last visited th e city and spent a few
days there before flying to the United Kingdom his views did not change very much.

Of course, he did not real y see much of Lagos then. His min d was, as it were, on
higher things. He spent the few days with his “countryman,” Joseph Okeke, a clerk in
the Survey Department. Obi and Joseph had been classmate s at the Umuofia C.M.S.

Central School. But Joseph had not gone on to a secondary s chool because he was
too old and his parents were poor. He had joined the Educati on Corps of the 82nd
Division and, when the war ended, the clerical service of the Nigerian Government.

Joseph was at Lagos Motor Park to meet his lucky friend who was passing
through Lagos to the United Kingdom. He took him to his lod gings in Obalende. It was only one room. A curtain of light-blue cloth ran the ful breadth of the room
separating the Holy of Holies (as he cal ed his double spring bed) from the sitting
area. His cooking utensils, boxes, and other personal effects were hidden away under

the Holy of Holies. The sitting area was taken up with two ar mchairs, a settee
(otherwise cal ed “me and my girl”), and a round table on w hich he displayed his
photo album. At night, his houseboy moved away the round table and spread his mat on the floor.

Joseph had so much to tel Obi on his first night in Lagos tha t it was past three
when they slept. He told him about the cinema and the danc e hal s and about political meetings.

From Chinua Achebe, No Longer at Ease (London: Wil iam He inemann, 1960), 19–

22, 149–
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“Dancing is very important nowadays. No girl wil look at yo u if you can’t dance.

I first met Joy at the dancing school.” “Who is Joy?” asked O bi, who was fascinated
by what he was learning of this strange and sinful new world . “She was my girl friend for—let’s see …”—
he counted off his fingers—“… March, April, May, June, July— for five months. She made these pil owcases for me.”

Obi raised himself instinctively to look at the pil ow he was l ying on. He had
taken particular notice of it earlier in the day. It had the stra nge word osculate sewn on it, each letter in a different color.

“She was a nice girl but sometimes very foolish. Sometimes, though, I wish we

hadn’t broken up. She was simply mad about me; and she w as a virgin when I met her, which is very rare here.”

Joseph talked and talked and final y became less and less co herent. Then without
any pause at al his talk was transformed into a deep snore, which continued until the morning.

The very next day Obi found himself taking a compulsory wa lk down Lewis
Street. Joseph had brought a woman home and it was quite clear that Obi’s presence
in the room was not desirable; so he went out to have a look round. The girl was
one of Joseph’s new finds, as he told him later. She was dark and tal with an enormous pneumatic bosom under a tight-fitting red and yel ow dress. Her lips and
long fingernails were a bril iant red, and her eyebrows were fine black lines. She

long fingernails were a bril iant red, and her eyebrows were fine black lines. She
looked not unlike those wooden masks made in Ikot Ekpene. Altogether she left a
nasty taste in Obi’s mouth, like the multicolored word oscula te on the pil owcase….

On top of it al came his mother’s death. He sent al he coul d find for her funeral,
but it was already being said to his eternal shame that a wo man who had borne so
many children, one of whom was in a European post, deserv ed a better funeral than
she got. One Umuofia man who had been on leave at home when she died brought

the news to Lagos to the meeting of the Umuofia Progressiv e Union.

“It was a thing of shame,” he said. Someone else wanted to know, by the way,
why that beast (meaning Obi) had not obtained permission t o go home. “That is
what Lagos can do to a young man. He runs after sweet thin gs, dances breast to
breast with women and forgets his home and his people. Do you know what
medicine that osu woman may have put into his soup to tur n his eyes and ears away from his people?”…

“Everything you have said is true. But there is one thing I w ant you to learn.

Whatever happens in this world has a meaning. As our peopl e say: ‘Wherever
something stands, another thing stands beside it.’ You see t his thing cal ed blood.

There is nothing like it. That is why when you plant a yam it produces another yam,
and if you plant an orange it bears oranges. I have seen ma ny things in my life, but I
have never yet seen a banana tree yield a coco yam. Why d o I say this? You young
men here, I want you to listen because it is from listening to old men that you learn
wisdom. I know that when I return to Umuofia I cannot claim to be an old man. But
here in this Lagos I am an old man to the rest of you.” He pa used for effect. “This
boy that we are al talking about, what has he done? He was told that his mother

died and he did not care. It is a strange and surprising thing.
”

MEXICO: OCTAVIO PAZ

Octavio Paz was born in 1914 in Mexico City. He enjoyed an outstanding career in poetry and criticism, founding a number of literary reviews. He served in the Mexican diplomatic corps, though he often protested government repression of political dissent. Paz frequently taught in the United States and wrote in English as wel as Spanish; he also developed extensive contacts with intel ectual circles in Europe. Labyrinth of Solitude, his most famous single work (published in 1962), is an exploration of Mexican character as it was shaped historical y and as it compares to the characteristics of other nations in Latin America and the West. Paz won the Nobel Prize in literature in 1990. He died in 1998.

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THE LABYRINTH OF SOLITUDE

Our [Mexican] sense of inferiority—real or imagined—might be explained at least partly by the reserve with which the Mexican faces other people and the unpredictable violence with which his repressed emotions break through his mask of impassivity. But his solitude is vaster and profounder than his sense of inferiority. It is impossible to equate these two attitudes: when you sense

that you are alone, it
does not mean that you feel inferior, but rather that you feel
you are different. Also,
a sense of inferiority may sometimes be an il usion, but solit
ude is a hard fact. We
are truly different. And we are truly alone....

Man is alone everywhere. But the solitude of the Mexican, u
nder the great stone
night of the high plateau that is stil inhabited by insatiable
gods, is very different

night of the high plateau that is stil inhabited by insatiable
gods, is very different
from that of the North American, who wanders in an abstrac
t world of machines,
fel ow citizens and moral precepts. In the Val ey of Mexico m
an feels himself
suspended between heaven and earth, and he oscil ates bet
ween contrary powers and
forces, and petrified eyes, and devouring mouths. Reality—
that is, the world that surrounds us—
exists by itself here, has a life of its own, and was not invent
ed by
man as it was in the United States. The Mexican feels himsel
f to have been torn from
the womb of this reality, which is both creative and destructi
ve, both Mother and Tomb.

From Octavio Paz, The Labyrinth of Solitude, and Other Essa
ys, trans. Lysander
Kemp, Yara Milos, and R. P. Belash (New York: Grove Press, 1
985), 19, 20, 29–30, 37, 66–67, 362, 372–
73, 374. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

He has forgotten the word that ties him to al those forces th rough which life
manifests itself. Therefore he shouts or keeps silent, stabs or prays, or fal s asleep for a hundred years.

The history of Mexico is the history of a man seeking his par entage, his origins.

He has been influenced at one time or another by France, S pain, the United States
and the militant indigenists of his own country, and he cross es history like a jade
comet, now and then giving off flashes of lightning. What is he pursuing in his
eccentric course? He wants to go back beyond the catastrop he he suffered: he wants
to be a sun again, to return to the center of that life from wh ich he was separated
one day. (Was that day the Conquest? Independence?) Our s olitude has the same
roots as religious feelings. It is a form of orphanhood, an obs cure awareness that we
have been torn from the Al , and an ardent search: a flight a nd a return, an effort to
reestablish the bonds that unite us with the universe.…

… The Mexican is always remote, from the world and from o ther people. And also from himself.

The speech of our people reflects the extent to which we pro tect ourselves from
the outside world: the ideal of manliness is never to “crack,” never to back down.

Those who “open themselves up” are cowards. Unlike other people, we believe that

opening oneself up is a weakness or a betrayal. The Mexican can bend, can bow humbly, can even stoop, but he cannot back down, that is, he cannot allow the outside world to penetrate his privacy. The man who backs down is not to be trusted, is a traitor or a person of doubtful loyalty; he babbles secrets and is incapable of confronting a dangerous situation. Women are inferior beings because, in submitting, they open themselves up. Their inferiority is constitutional and resides in their sex, their submissiveness, which is a wound that never heals.

Hermeticism is one of the several recourses of our suspicion and distrust. It shows that we instinctively regard the world around us to be dangerous. This reaction is justifiable if one considers what our history has been and the kind of society we have created. The harshness and hostility of our environment and the hidden, indefinable threat that is always afloat in the air, oblige us to close ourselves in, like those plants that survive by storing up liquid within their spiny exteriors....

... The Mexican, heir to the great pre-Columbian religions based on nature, is a good deal more pagan than the Spaniard, and does not condemn the natural world.

Sexual love is not tinged with grief and horror in Mexico as it is in Spain. Instincts themselves are not dangerous; the danger lies in any perso

nal, individual expression
of them. … It is noteworthy that our images of the working c lass are not colored
with similar feelings, even though the worker also lives apar t from the center of
society, physical y as wel as otherwise, in districts and spec ial communities. When a

society, physical y as wel as otherwise, in districts and spec ial communities. When a
contemporary novelist introduces a character who symboliz es health or destruction,
fertility or death, he rarely chooses a worker, despite the fac t that the worker
represents the death of an old society and the birth of a new ….

The modern worker lacks individuality. The class is stronger than the individual
and his personality dissolves in the generic. That is the first and gravest mutilation a
man suffers when he transforms himself into an industrial w age earner. Capitalism
deprives him of his human nature (this does not happen to t he servant) by reducing
him to an element in the work process, i.e., to an object. An d like any object in the
business world, he can be bought and sold. Because of his s ocial condition he
quickly loses any concrete and human relationship to the wo rld. The machines he
operates are not his and neither are the things he produces. Actual y he is not a
worker at al , because he does not create individual works o r is so occupied with one
aspect of production that he is not conscious of those he do

es create. He is a laborer,
which is an abstract noun designating a mere function rathe
r than a specific job....

... Not only the popular religion of Mexico but the Mexicans'
entire life is steeped in Indian culture—
the family, love, friendship, attitudes toward one's father an
d
mother, popular legends, the forms of civility and life in com
mon, the image of
authority and political power, the vision of death and sex, w
ork and festivity.

Mexico is the most Spanish country in Latin America; at the
same time it is the most
Indian. Mesoamerican civilization died a violent death, but M
exico is Mexico thanks
to the Indian presence. Though the language and religion, th
e political institutions
and the culture of the country are Western, there is one asp
ect of Mexico that faces in another direction—
the Indian direction. Mexico is a nation between two
civilizations and two pasts.

Above and beyond success and failure, Mexico is stil asking
itself the question that has occurred to most clear-
thinking Mexicans since the end of the eighteenth
century: the question about modernization. In the nineteent
h century, it was
believed that to adopt the new democratic and liberal princi
ples was enough. Today,
after almost two centuries of setbacks, we have realized tha
t countries change very
slowly, and that if such changes are to be fruitful they must
be in harmony with the
past and the traditions of each nation. And so Mexico has to

find its own road to
modernity. Our past must not be an obstacle but a starting p
oint. This is extremely
difficult, given the nature of our traditions—
difficult but not impossible. To avoid
new disasters, we Mexicans must reconcile ourselves with o
ur past: only in this way
shal we succeed in finding a route to modernity. The search
for our own model of
modernization is a theme directly linked with another: today
we know that
modernity, both the capitalist and the pseudo-
socialist versions of the totalitarian
bureaucracies, is mortal y wounded in its very core—
the idea of continuous,
unlimited progress. The nations that inspired our nineteenth
-century liberals—

England, France, and especial y the United States—
are doubting, vacil ating, and
cannot find their way. They have ceased to be universal exa
mples. The Mexicans of
the nineteenth century turned their eyes toward the great W
estern democracies; we
have nowhere to turn ours.... The sickness of the West is mo
ral rather than social
and economic.... But the real, most profound discord lies in t
he soul. The future has
become the realm of horror, and the present has turned into
a desert. The liberal
societies spin tirelessly, not forward but round and round. If
they change, they are
not transfigured. The hedonism of the West is the other face
of desperation; its
skepticism is not wisdom but renunciation....

CHAPTER 33

WOMEN AND GLOBAL CHANGE

Women in virtual y every part of the world encountered grea t changes during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Many gained new access to education and th e right to vote. Many reduced their birth rate. It is possible to argue that some of the key features of traditional patriarchal society were beginnin g to yield, and this was a huge change in the human condition.

But there are complexities. Men sometimes retaliated. In cer tain areas, women's economic position worsened. High-sounding principles were often ignored. And there was great regional variety in al aspects of women's li ves.

Documents in this section are organized into three sets. First , new international conventions for women, strongly reflecting feminist ideas ab out rights, played a genuine role in the process of change. Second, conditions of poor women in Mexico and Kenya help test ideas about change and indicate some of the variety that complicates the subject. Third, comments by educated wom en in India and Nigeria raise questions about the nature and direction of change, an d about the validity of Western standards.

Some change is involved in al the materials presented; som e of it even points in similar directions, for example, in the area of birth control a

nd education. But great
disparities show up as wel , plus basic disputes about what directions change should take.

Questions

1. What are the key elements of the global human rights ap
proach to gender issues?

2. According to peasant women’s own statements, what asp
ects of vil age life and
expectations have been changing most rapidly for them? W
hat aspects have changed least?

3. What kinds of traditional values do women continue to ex
press, even amid change?

4. What is the relationship between global standards and th
e lives and changing
experiences of women in Kenya and Mexico? Were global rig
hts statements
meaningful reflections of civilizations and changes in wome
n’s lives?

5. What are the main differences, according to interview evi
dence, between the
situations and attitudes of Mexican and of African women? A
re there differences
in relations with men in the two societies?

6. What are the problems surrounding birth control as an iss
ue in rural society?

Were conditions in this regard significantly different in Africa
 and Mexico during the 1970s?

7. Why does Madhu Kishwar praise arranged marriages?

8. What Nigerian traditions does Ifi Amadiume identify as pa
rticularly hard for

Western scholars to understand? What are her criteria for ju dging women's conditions?

9. Do Amadiume and Kishwar agree on some aspects of wo men's goals in the West that they find objectionable?

10. Do Amadiume and Kishwar agree on the directions of re cent change? Which one
seems to have more confidence that things are stil going w el for women?

11. Do Amadiume and Kishwar share any attitudes with vil a ge women in Third
World societies? Which one suggests a clearer affiliation wit h upper-class status?

Which one emphasizes recent changes that might harm low er-class women?

For Further Discussion

1. What previous ideas and movements help explain the nat ure of the international women's rights agenda?

2. Judging by evidence from Mexico and Africa in the 1970s, have conditions for
women on the whole been improving or deteriorating? Is the re a similar process
of "modernization" at work? How would a Western feminist j udge the women's attitudes?

3. What are the advantages and limitations of interviewing a s a source of evidence
for contemporary history? Are interviewees likely to slant th eir remarks at al ?

What other evidence would help form a picture of women's views and conditions in late-twentieth-century Kenya and Mexico?

4. The evidence in Huston's interviews comes from the 1970s. How much change would you expect to have occurred, and in what directions, a quarter-century later? Would you expect the same kinds of change in Mexico and in Kenya?

5. Would Amadiume criticize Huston's approach as an example of Western bias about the Third World?

6. Why might upper-class Indian and African women differ about the directions of change in their societies in the twentieth century?

7. What is your evaluation of the relevance of Western feminist ideals to societies like India or Africa?

8. Wil global human rights principles increasingly define women's lives?

FOURTH W ORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

The United Nations began developing special "years" for women in 1965; each year occasioned a major global conference and resounding proclamations of women's rights. These in turn helped spur changes in various national legislations and the creation of nongovernment organizations in many places, from Africa to Latin America, designed to further women's rights. The fol owing document emanated from the major global conference of 1995, widely attended

by women from al
regions, but particularly from outside Western Europe and th
e United States

• • •

BEIJING DECLARATION (SEPTEMBER 1995)

We, the Governments participating in the Fourth World Conf
erence on Women…

recognizing that the status of women has advanced in some
important respects in
the past decade but that progress has been uneven, that ine
qualities between women
and men have persisted and major obstacles remain, with s
erious consequences for the wel -
being of al people… and also recognizing that this situation
is exacerbated
by the increasing poverty that is affecting the lives of the m
ajority of the world's
people, in particular women and children, with origins in bot
h the national and
international domains, dedicate ourselves unreservedly to a
ddressing these

international domains, dedicate ourselves unreservedly to a
ddressing these
constraints and obstacles and thus enhancing further the ad
vancement and
empowerment of women al over the world, and agree that t
his requires urgent
action in the spirit of determination, hope, cooperation and s
olidarity, now and to
carry us forward into the next century….

We are convinced that:

Women’s empowerment and their ful participation on the b asis of equality in al
spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access
to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace;
Women’s rights are human rights; Equal rights, opportunitie s and access to
resources, equal sharing of responsibilities for the family by men and women, and a
harmonious partnership between them are critical to their w el -being and that of
their families as wel as to the consolidation of democracy; E radication of poverty
based on sustained economic growth, social development, e nvironmental protection
and social justice requires the involvement of women in eco nomic and social
development, equal opportunities and the ful and equal par ticipation of women and
men as agents and beneficiaries of people-centered sustainable development; The
explicit recognition and reaffirmation of the right of al wom en to control al
aspects of their health, in particular their own fertility, is bas ic to their
empowerment; Local, national, regional and global peace is attainable and is
inextricably linked with the advancement of women, who ar e a fundamental force
for leadership, conflict resolution and the promotion of lastin g peace at al levels; It
is essential to design, implement and monitor, with the ful participation of women,
effective, efficient and mutual y reinforcing gender-sensitive policies and

programmes, including development policies and programmes, at all levels that will foster the empowerment and advancement of women....

We are determined to:

Intensify efforts and actions to... ensure the full enjoyment by women and the girl child of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and take effective action against violations of these rights and freedoms; Take all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and the girl child and remove all obstacles to gender equality and the advancement and empowerment of women; Encourage men to participate fully in all actions towards equality; Promote women's economic independence, including employment, and eradicate the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women by addressing the structural causes of poverty through changes uneconomic, ensuring equal access for all women, including those in rural areas, as vital development agents, to productive resources, opportunities and public services; Promote people-centered sustainable development, including sustained economic growth, through the provision of basic education, life-long education, literacy and training, and primary health care for girls and women; Take positive steps to ensure peace for the advancement of women and, recognizing the leading role that women have played in the peace movement, work actively

towards general and complete disarmament under strict an d effective international
control, and support negotiations on the conclusion, without delay, of a universal
and multilateral y and effectively verifiable comprehensive n uclear-test-ban treaty
which contributes to nuclear disarmament and the preventio n of the proliferation of
nuclear weapons in al its aspects; Prevent and eliminate al forms of violence
against women and girls; Ensure equal access to and equal t reatment of women and
men in education and health care and enhance women's se xual and reproductive
health as wel as education; Promote and protect al human rights of women and
girls; Intensify efforts to ensure equal enjoyment of al huma n rights and

girls; Intensify efforts to ensure equal enjoyment of al huma n rights and
fundamental freedoms for al women and girls who face mul tiple barriers to their
empowerment and advancement because of such factors as their race, age, language,
ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability, or because they are indigenous people;
Ensure respect for international law, including humanitarian law, in order to protect
women and girls in particular; Develop the ful est potential o f girls and women of
al ages, ensure their ful and equal participation in building a better world for al
and enhance their role in the development process....

VILLAGE WOMEN

INTERVIEWS WITH MEXICAN PEASANT WOMEN IN THE 1970S

These interviews were conducted by an American anthropol ogist, Perdita Huston.

Huston was trained in ethnographic interview techniques, th ough in several cases
she had to rely on interpreters. She was also inspired by a fe minist concern for
women's issues, including cases of clear mistreatment. The women who speak out
here are from southern Mexico, many of them Indians.

• • •

Interview with a Zapotec Indian

Maria Luisa spoke to me about her sister's [Anna's] life:

"She is in the process of breaking up with her husband. The y have four children,
but they didn't get married until the third child was born. Th en the priest said, 'If
you don't get married, I'm not baptizing your children.'"

"Anna's husband wants to live like the old men used to live —having women right under his thumb—
not the way it is today. Even our family is against it. They sa y,

'He has such old-
fashioned ideas.' The woman has to be in the house. She ha s to
confess everything to him. She can't have a thought of her o wn. Even that's okay.

You can be jealous. You can even be a tyrant. But you have t o do your share. You
have to bring in money. The reason the family is so down on him is not because he's
a tyrant, but because he doesn't fulfil his part of the marria ge. She has to go out
and look for food while he's gal ivanting around. That's what doesn't make sense.

You know—rules are rules."

"Now he's beating her even more than before because his mother is constantly
fil ing his head with ideas. 'Anna doesn't cook good food,' sh e says—and things like
that. He beats her up; she is black and blue on the thighs or on the back or wherever.

He says he has the right to rule. You know, the male doesn't want to be made a fool
of. He accuses other men of being weak. He says, 'I'm not li ke those men. I don't let women give orders in my house.'

"But Anna is a good wife. She works hard, and if he would le t her out of the
house, their family would have more money. She works hard in the field, but he
doesn't even give her money for food. Granted, he doesn't r eal y earn that much
himself, but he could. He could take crops into town and sel them and bring back
the money, but he doesn't. He feels she shouldn't have mon ey. He works in the field,
but he doesn't look for other work. So he gets very little. He doesn't want to sel
much, and there is not enough money to feed the family, so

Anna has to sel things
or borrow five pesos here and there. Then he gets enraged a
nd blames her for not managing….

From Perdita Huston, Third World Women Speak Out (New Yo
rk: Praeger Publishers, 1979), 41–42, 78–79, 82–83.

[On education, asked what she would have wanted to learn at school]: “I don’t
know what exactly, but it would have been something that would earn money. We
are very backward here and we don’t know anything. … the problem is that we don’t know how to earn money.”

Interviews at a Birth Control Clinic

“They say terrible things about women who want to [practic
e birth control]. Some
say, ‘The only reason you want birth control is so you can go
 with other men.’ Once
the radio said, ‘Father of the family, if you want to give your children a good up-
bringing, take care of them wel and remember that smal fa
milies live better.’ Wel ,
my brother just laughed. You see, some people are very igno
rant.”

“The only thing I don’t do is go to confession, because then I
 would have to
confess that I take the pil , and the priest would say, ‘Leave the church.’ I could stil
go to mass, but he wouldn’t give me holy communion if I tol
d about the pil .”…

“I went to school for a while, but the teacher didn’t come to school very often, so
we didn’t learn much. I guess I taught myself to read.”

“I have been married for four years. I have only these two children. The first is three, the other almost a year.”…

“The main thing that makes the times different, I think, is the control women
have over the number of children in a family. A family can be planned now; it can
live a better life. Women have more facilities for everything because of this. I began
to take contraceptives when this last child was eight months old. I take the pil .”

“My husband wants a boy because these children are both girls; he doesn’t know
that I am taking the pil . He wants a boy and says that when I have one, then I can
use contraceptives. I want to wait at least two years so that this little girl is older.

Then I wil try for the boy.”…

“For me, family planning is very important because my husband does not earn big
wages. For the moment, we just can’t afford more than two children.…

“I told you we were very poor when I was a child. We were six children, and my
father didn’t earn much. That is why I want just two or three children. I don’t want my children to grow up like me—without an education. I feel very ashamed and bad
about not having any education. I want my children to go to school and learn many,
many things. I don’t want them to live by the rumors of the street. I want them to

learn for themselves. I want them to be independent and pr
oud of themselves.”

INTERVIEWS WITH AFRICAN PEASANT WOMEN IN THE 1970S

In these selections, vil age women from Kenya provide most of the statements,
discussing their goals in the context of changes and continui ties they saw around
them. Again, their statements can be compared with the jud gments about rural life
by Kenyan professionals such as a doctor and a social worke r.

• • •

A Great-Grandmother

I don’t real y know my age, but I remember that I was marri ed during the great war

[World War I]. In those days we lived al right—
happily. Things were quite different
from what they are now. We got these clothes only recently. We used to wear
something from banana fibers just to cover our lower parts. It was scratchy, but we
were used to it. I think al the changes came when the churc hes came. We got our
clothing, and then we said we should cover our bodies and g o to school—maybe go

clothing, and then we said we should cover our bodies and g o to school—maybe go to church.

“We had cows, goats, sheep, and hens. … Even the chickens didn’t get sick in

those days. These days, more people die than used to. We had no hospitals; we were
just sick, and if you knew any medicines, any herbs, you used them. There were
malaria, stomachaches, and backaches. But not many used to die. They lived to be
very old men and women. When you heard so-and-so was dead, everyone used to go,
because that was the only funeral in a long time.

“In those days, we also used to have old women who knew herbs and helped
women in childbirth and with their babies’ health. In the old days, even if you had
ten children you could care for them. You were happy because you had many little
girls and boys to be married, as well as many grandchildren. I had nine children;
three died as babies. They had diarrhea and just died. I don’t know why. Now
children don’t die as much any more because we have doctors and hospitals nearby.”…

“What we need in this village is teachers to teach women handicrafts and sewing
and agricultural skills. We have organized a women’s group. I am one of the leaders.

We are saving up for a building to meet in. All women are trying to earn money, and
we want to have a building for our meetings. It will be called the ‘adult education building’—
with rooms for handicrafts, literacy, and other things.”

“We also want our children to be educated—
so we can have good leaders to keep

our country good. I think now it is best to have only four children—so you can take care of them.

“It is better to educate a girl than a boy, although one should educate both. Girls
are better. They help a lot. See this house? My daughters built it for me. If you don’t
have any daughters, who will build for you? The boys will marry and take care of their wives—
that’s all. They don’t care about mothers. For example, if my son gets married, the daughter-in-
law will say, ‘Let’s take our mothers to live with us.’ The
son will say, ‘No, we will just have our own family and do our own things.’ So you are left alone. What do you do?”…

From Perdita Huston, Third World Women Speak Out (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1979), 12–13, 42–43, 72–73, 79–80.

“These days there is no trust. Men have defeated us. They don’t listen: they have
big heads. Before, we mixed with each other—
men and women. There were no
differences between us. We trusted one another, but now men are not
straightforward. These are the changes taking place.”

A Nineteen-Year-Old Student

“My mother has eleven children. She is my father’s only wife. She works in the fields
and grows the food we eat. She plants cabbage, spinach, and corn. She works very
hard, but with so many children it is difficult to get enough food or money. All of
my sisters and brothers go to school. One is already a teacher, and that is why I am

trying to learn a profession. If I can get enough schooling, I c
an serve the country
and my own family. I can also manage to have a life for mys
elf. That is why I came
to this school. We have a big family, and I have to help.

“My life is very different from my mother’s. She just stayed i
n the family until she
married. Life is much more difficult now because everybody
is dependent on money.

Long ago, money was unheard of. No one needed money. Bu
t now you can’t even
get food without cash. Times are very difficult. That is why t
he towns are creating

get food without cash. Times are very difficult. That is why t
he towns are creating day-care centers—
so women can work and have their own lives. I have to work
, for without it I wil not have enough money for today’s life.

“These are the problems I face and try to think about. How s
hal I manage to pick
up this life so that I can live a better one? You know, we peo
ple of Kenya like to
serve our parents when they are stil alive—
to help the family. But first, women have
to get an education. Then if you get a large family and don’t
 know how to feed it—if
you don’t have enough money for food—
you can find work and get some cash.

That’s what I wil teach my children: ‘Get an education first.’
” …

“If I had a chance to go to the university, I would learn more
 about health

education. I could help women that way. If I were in a positio
n of authority. I would
real y try to educate women. Right now, girls are left behind
in education. It costs
money, and parents think it is more important to educate bo
ys. But I think that if
people are intel igent, there is no difference. Girls and boys
should be educated the
same.... And I would change the laws so that men would un
derstand women and
their needs and not beat them as they do.

“I only hope that I wil have a mature husband who wil unde
rstand and discuss things with me.”

A Leader of a Women’s Cooperative

“Most women don’t rely on their husbands now. If they get s
ome money, wel and
good; and if they don’t, they just try to get money for thems
elves—sel ing vegetables
or making and sel ing handicrafts.”

“Life is very difficult these days, and men are paying less att
ention to their wives.

You see, men have wrongly just taken advantage of having
more money. Instead of
using money properly, to improve the lives of their families,
they spend it on al the

‘facilities’ available at hotels. Instead of spending nights in t
heir own homes, they
fight at home and seek women outside—
in the hotels. Many men cheat on their
wives now because they are employed and have money. A h
usband can say, ‘I have

been sent as a driver to Nairobi' (or elsewhere), when he act ual y spends the money on girls."

"So women are fed up. They think now that relying on a ma n can be a problem.

They say, 'We should try to do something ourselves. Then, whether we get something
from our men or not, we stil wil be able to raise our childre n properly.' The
problem that many women face is that they must become s elf-supporting. They
either have no support from their husbands at al , or very lit tle. And there is no law to protect them."

"But women are trying to do something for themselves, and if they had the capital
they could establish businesses to help them make money. T he main problem here is
the money problem. Many women are alone. They need to e arn for their families."...

"Women feel very hurt because they think their men don't r ecognize them as
human beings. They are unhappy because of this inequality. I am lucky; my husband
is good. He never took another wife. We are stil together."...

Urban Family Planning Worker

"We get referrals from other workers. A nutritionist, for exa mple, wil come and tel
us that she visited a home and feels that the home needs a dvice on family planning.

So we go to the family and talk with them. We also go the c hild welfare clinic and

talk with mothers there. We find that some do not feel free t
o talk about their
problems there, so we go to their own homes and have furth
er discussions. The

problems there, so we go to their own homes and have furth
er discussions. The
woman might say, “I’m wil ing to practice family planning, b
ut my husband is
against it. I’ve tried to persuade him, but he has refused. So
I don’t know whether
there is anything you can do for me.’” …

“Some say that they are able to care for their children—
so they don’t see why
they should participate in family planning. Others say they d
on’t see why they
should plan their families, since the idea is not an African tra
dition but has been
brought in by Westerners. Also, some men fear that when a
woman starts using
family planning, she is in that way exposed to the world and
can go with any other
man, since she knows she won’t get pregnant. They don’t tr
ust their wives.”…

…“Women fear medicines and they fear their husbands. The
re are a lot of fears,
and it wil take much time to catch on.”…

“The men don’t understand that family planning is good bec
ause it gives the
woman time to rest between pregnancies. They don’t care
much about that, or about
the condition of their children. You’l never see a man going
to a family planning

clinic. The men here believe: Let a woman be free of childbearing and she will go
everywhere. They want a woman to have a child every year until she becomes old,
while they are free to go gadding about. So if a woman doesn't keep on having
children, her husband will get angry and take another wife."

A Female Midwife

The poor health here is not a poverty problem. There is plenty of land. The problem
is the lack of knowledge about nutrition. That's one thing that has to be learned. If
people knew how to utilize foods and what to plant to feed the children, it would be better....

"The nutritional problem is also due to some of the superstitions and taboos.

There are still many areas where people believe children should not eat eggs
because, they say, the children will never talk. You just have to keep persuading
people. When mothers realize that children who eat eggs do talk, they will convince
other mothers that their children will not be harmed by eggs. But you can't force
them to suddenly change what they do. First I ask them to try other things that give
the same food nutrients as eggs. Women are not supposed to eat chicken either—

although the men do. It's not fair."

UPPER-CLASS AND SCHOLARLY VIEWS

INDIA: MADHU KISHWAR ON LOVE AND MARRIAGE

Madhu Kishwar is an Indian scholar who has written widely o n family issues; the next selection is from a magazine article by her on Indian an d Western views of marriage. She reflects the influence of Western ideas, from her own education and from channels such as Hol ywood films. But she relies more heavily on pol ing data and the evaluation of traditional practices, which she juxtap oses with Western models.

• • •

The recent Eyewitness-MARG opinion pol conducted with 1,715 adults in the five metropolitan cities reported in SUNDAY magazine's 9–15 January 1994 issue that 74 percent of women and an almost equal proportion of me n believe that arranged marriages are more likely to succeed than love marriages. Al most 80 percent of respondents felt that a young recently married couple—if they had a choice—should live with their parents. That these opinions are not a mindle ss hangover of

live with their parents. That these opinions are not a mindle ss hangover of

"tradition" becomes evident as they report that over 90 perc ent of the same respondents believed that men should help with household chores, and eighty percent believed that, if they had one daughter and one son

, they would leave an
equal amount to each in any Wil that they made. These pol
results are supportive
of some of my impressions gathered from talking to numero
us young women,
including my own students, as to why most young women ar
e not very enamoured with “love” marriages.

From Madhu Kishwar, “Love and Marriage,” Manushi: A Journ
al about Women and Society 80 (1994): II, 13–
14, 18. Reprinted by permission of the author.

Feminists, socialists and other radicals often project the syst
em of arranged
marriages as one of the key factors leading to women’s oppr
ession in India. This
view derives from the West, which recognizes two supposedl
y polar opposite forms of marriage
—“love marriage” versus arranged marriage.…

Self-Arranged Marriages

Critics of the family arranged marriage system in India have
rightly focused on how
prospective brides are humiliated by being endlessly display
ed for approval when
marriages are being negotiated by families. The ritual of lad
ki dikhana, with the
inevitable rejections women (now even men) often undergo
before being selected [is part of this process].…

However, women do not real y escape the pressures of displ
aying and parading
themselves in cultures where they are expected to have self
-arranged marriages.

Witness the amount of effort a young woman in western societies has to put in to look attractive enough to hook eligible young men. One gets the feeling they are on constant self display as opposed to the periodic displays in family arranged marriages. Western women have to diet to stay trim since it is not fashionable nowadays to be fat, get artificial padding for their breasts (1.5 million American women are reported to have gone through silicon surgery to get their breasts reshaped or enlarged), try to get their complexion to glow, if not with real health, at least with a cosmetic blush. They must also learn how to be viewed as “attractive”

and seductive to men, how to be a witty conversationalist as well as an ego booster

—

in short, to become the kind of appendage a man would feel proud to have around him. Needless to say, not all women manage to do all the above, though most drive themselves crazy trying. Western women have to compete hard with each other in order to hook a partner. And once having found him, they have to be alert to prevent other women from snatching him….

The humiliations western women have to go through, having first to grab a man, and then to devise strategies to keep other women off him, is in many ways much worse than what a woman in parent-arranged marriages has to go through. She does

not have to chase and hook men al by herself. Her father, h er brother, her uncles
and aunts and the entire kunba join together to hunt for a m an. In that sense the
woman concerned does not have to carry the burden of findi ng a husband al alone.

And given the relative stability of marriage among communi ties where families take
a lot of interest in keeping the marriage going, a woman is n ot so paranoid about
her husband abandoning her in favour of a more attractive woman. Consequently,
Indian women are not as desperate as their western counter parts to look for ever
youthful, trim and sexual y attractive marriage partners.…

NIGERIA: IFI AMADIUME

Ifi Amadiume, a Nigerian scholar here studying a vil age in t he Ibo (Igbo) territory

Ifi Amadiume, a Nigerian scholar here studying a vil age in t he Ibo (Igbo) territory

—
the same part of Nigeria referred to by Chinua Achebe (ch. 2 8)—has published
widely on African gender and family traditions. From a local y prominent family,
she spent time as a student in the West, and from that expe rience she feels she
gained knowledge that she can apply to comparisons with Af rica.

• • •

When the 1960s and 1970s female academics and Western f eminists began to attack
social anthropology, riding on the crest of the new wave of women's studies, the
issues they took on were androcentrism and sexism. … The methods they adopted
indicated to Black women that White feminists were no less racist than the
patriarchs of social anthropology whom they were busy con demning for male bias.

They fantasized a measure of superiority over African and ot her Third World
women. Black women's critique could not therefore be restri cted to the male bias of
social anthropology and not chal enge White women. Drawin g their data from the
Third World, especial y Africa, works on women produced in Europe and America
have shown White women's unquestioning acceptance of an thropology's racist
division of the world. In the debates in the West, the Third W orld supplied the 'raw
data' for random sampling, citation and il ustration of points . It baffles African
women that Western academics and feminists feel no appre hension or disrespectful
trivialization in taking on al of Africa or, indeed, al the Third World in one book. It
is revealing that most such works have not been written by women from Third
World nations; they, instead, tend to write about their partic ular ethnic group, their country or surrounding region.…

The flexibility of Igbo gender construction meant that gende r was separate from

biological sex. Daughters could become sons and conseque
ntly male. Daughters and
women in general could be husbands to wives and conseque
ntly males in relation to their wives, etc.…

From Ifi Amadiume, Male Daughters, Female Husbands. Gen
der and Sex in an
African Society (London: Zed Books, 1987), 3–4, 15, 89–
90, 91, 132, 141. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

An insight into this remarkable gender system is crucial to t
he understanding and
appreciation of the political status women had in traditional
Igbo societies and the political choices open to them.…

It can, therefore, be claimed that the Igbo language, in com
parison with English,
for example, has not built up rigid associations between cert
ain adjectives or
attributes and gender subjects, nor certain objects and gend
er possessive pronouns.

The genderless word mmadu, humankind, applies to both se
xes. There is no usage, as
there is in English, of the word ‘man’ to represent both sexe
s, neither is there the
cumbersome option of saying ‘he or she,’ ‘his or her,’ ‘him o
r her.’ In Igbo, O stands
for he, she and even it, a stands for the impersonal one, and
 nya for the imperative, let him or her.

This linguistic system of few gender distinctions makes it po
ssible to
conceptualize certain social roles as separate from sex and
gender, hence the possibility for either sex to fil the role.…

The use of these weapons of war must be understood in the context of polygynous marriage and compound structure. Of course it was possible for a man to turn to another wife when one wife refused to have sexual relations with him. The important point here is that women lived separately. The fact that a wife did not spend the night with her husband made it possible for her to use sexual refusal as a

spend the night with her husband made it possible for her to use sexual refusal as a weapon of war without running the risk of marital rape. This is not the case for women in monogamous marriages who cling to the Christian idea of the sanctity and sexual exclusiveness of their matrimonial beds. Western feminists are still finding it difficult to have rape in marriage recognized as a legal offence.

Refusal of sexual compliance by a wife still proved effective even when a man had sexual access to other wives. Such refusal implied defiance and denial of rights, and was ultimately a challenge to a husband's authority over his wife. The customary solution was not for the man to take the law into his own hands; he had the option of calling in other members of the family or appealing to the formal patrilineage organizations.... Obviously the weapon of sexual denial was most effective when used collectively, either by all the wives of a

man, al the wives of a
patrilineage, or better stil , al the women of Nnobi.

Indeed the earliest recorded mass protest movement by Igb
o women was the Nwaobiala—
the dancing women's movement of 1925. The basic demand
 of the
movement, which was dominated by elderly women, was th
e rejection of
Christianity and a return to traditional customs. Nnobi is me
ntioned as one of the
three towns where a military escort was sent to restore orde
r, as women there burnt
the market, blocked the main road and piled refuse in the co
urt house. Children
were withdrawn from school and the market was boycotted.
…

Overwhelming evidence shows that women in Nnobi and in I
gboland in general
were neither more comfortable nor more advantaged from a
n economic point of
view under colonialism. They had lost their grip on the contr
ol of liquid cash; men
had invaded the general market, and women were becomin
g helpless in their
personal relations with husbands. But, most important of al ,
 pro-female institutions
were being eroded both by the church and the colonial admi
nistration.…

… [W]omen's centrality in the production and sale of palm-
oil and kernels in
traditional Nnobi society gave them a considerable advanta
ge over their husbands.

The introduction of pioneer oil mil s mechanized the whole p rocess of extracting the palm-
oil and cracking the kernels. This, of course, meant a much higher oil yield
which necessitated bulk buying by the agents of the mil s an d the channel ing of
most of the vil age's palm fruit to the mil s. The main centre of production was
therefore shifted from the family to the mil s. At the same ti me, wives lost the near
monopoly they enjoyed in the traditional method of producti on and the independent
income they derived from it.... Instead of wives sel ing the p alm-oil and keeping
some of the profits, husbands now sold direct to the oil mil s or their agents, and col ected the money.

CHAPTER 34

GLOBAL CONSUMERISM AND ITS DISCONTENTS

One of the most striking developments of the past 120 year s has been the emergence
and growing importance of new forms of consumerism in lite ral y every part of the world. Consumerism—
an attachment to the process of acquiring and enjoying new material objects one does not strictly need—
is hardly a new phenomenon, but until
relatively recent times it was largely confined to the upper cl asses and sometimes
shunned even there in favor of purely customary group style s and/or religious
interests. Modern consumerism differs from past forms by b ecoming more important
in the lives of many people and by spreading wel beyond th e upper classes.

From the first, modern consumerism has involved global products and global styles. Items like sugar, tea, and coffee were consumer pioneers as they spread to Western Europe—and al involved importation from other parts of the world.

Chinese porcelain inspired a major consumer goods industry in eighteenth-century England. In the nineteenth century “oriental” rugs and furnishings, coming mainly from the Middle East, were al the rage in the West. In the twentieth century, Western and Japanese products gained growing global attention, from music to foods to toys to electronic gadgets. Consumer interests and “international” styles seemed to bridge across many cultural and political divides, creating some new types of comparisons in contemporary world history.

Despite its obvious importance, it is not easy to define what consumerism is or why it proves so attractive. This is one of the chal enges in interpreting the fol owing documents. At the same time, consumerism has long roused objections: it can be seen as shal ow; as foreign; as disruptive of proper values; as negating appropriate social hierarchies. Global consumerism also remains quite uneven: more available by far to urban than to rural people, to industrialized than to developing economies, even to young as opposed to older. Analyzing documents and comparing their meanings can help identify not only why consumerism has become such a prominent

force but also why it has not swept everyone along in its pat
h.

Questions

1. What are some of the major features of global consumerism? Do the Internet documents suggest the same kind of consumerism, or somewhat different approaches and interests?

2. Why does global consumerism find a greater audience among youth than among older people?

3. What is the relationship between global consumerism and Americanization?

4. What are some of the key objections to global consumerism, and from what kinds of people do they emanate?

5. How does consumerism figure into protests against “globalization”?

6. What issues are involved in interpreting the global role of a chain like McDonald’s?

For Further Discussion

1. Does successful consumerism increase human happiness? If not, how can one explain why it attracts so much participation?

2. Are protests against global consumerism likely to gain ground?

3. Are some parts of the world more open to global consumerism than others?

4. How does the analysis of global consumerism relate to larger issues in world history?

C ONSUMERISM ON THE INTERNET

The fol owing documents come from 2004 sites on the Inter net.

A MICHAEL JACKSON FAN IN SLOVENIA

TANJA KOVAC (A 23-YEAR-
OLD FINANCIAL ASSISTANT): The first time I heard a Michael Jackson
song was way back in 1987. It was the time when Michael w as on his world tour for
BAD. I was just 7 years old and I only knew Michael by the w ay he looks. When I
first became his fan I didn’t even know that he was a singer. I just came into my
sister’s room and saw a poster of him on the wal and my ey es immediately turned
to him. I remember asking my sister who this man was and my mouth was just wide
open. I just couldn’t believe that one man could look so bea utiful. A week after that
I heard the whole BAD album when my sister brought it hom e so I could hear it. I
guess my very first song by Michael was BAD since that’s th e first song on the
album. When I heard it I fel in love with him even more. He j ust has it al : the
looks, the voice and such a wonderful character. I remember being very much in shock over his whole image and music.

From: http://carniola.org/theglory/2004/04/tanja_kovac_mic. html.

TGOC: What’s in your current Michael Jackson col ection?

TANJA: I have a large col ection of Michael Jackson memorab ilia. There are so
many MJ things that people don’t even know exist. I have al of his albums, singles,
vinyls, picture discs, special edition discs, his rare mixes and tapes, Jackson 5 and
The Jacksons albums… al about his music. Then I have so m any of his books,
magazines (from al over the world), song books, calendars, notebooks, PVC bags
with MJ on it, puzzles, MJ perfumes, sculptures, badges, stick ers, over 1500 of his
original photos, over 100 videocassettes of rare footage of Michael Jackson, pil ows,
poster, promotional posters, tour books, flags, caps, Mystery drink cans, MJ dol s (which sing the Black or White song), T-shirts, Bil ie Jean glove, hats (one of them
was touched by Michael himself), DVD’s, concert tickets, ori ginal History tour bag.

… My most special items are two Michael Jackson autograph s that I got when I
went to see Michael live (Berlin and London). I made a tatto o on my right arm of one of the autographs.

TGOC: Tel me about the tattoo. Do you have any more— or are you planning on more?

TANJA: I always wanted to have a MJ tattoo and this dream c ame true for me just
two days after I met Micahel in Harrods, London. It was in Ju ne 2002. First I wanted
to make a tattoo of Michael’s face but since I didn’t have en ough money to do that, I
decided it would be best to make a tattoo of a MJ autograph that my boyfriend got

from Michael personal y just a few days before. Everyone wh o saw it til this day has
said it looks amazing, I've never heard anyone say anything bad about it. Yes, I plan
to do more of them. I want a tattoo of Michael's face and I b elieve I wil get it done soon.

TGOC: Does your boyfriend ever get jealous of your love for Michael Jackson?

TANJA: No. My boyfriend never gets jealous of my GIGANTIC love for Michael. He
was even with me when I got the chance to meet Michael an d didn't mind that I
kissed Michael's hand. My boyfriend is a Michael Jackson fan as wel .

TGOC: Is it difficult, as a fan, to watch what's happening to MJ now? How do you
know he is innocent? And what would you say to people who already think he's guilty?

TANJA: Yes it is painful to see what is happening to him now. I cannot believe that
people can be so mean and cruel to make such an injustice against him just because
of money. It breaks my heart to see him in pain and I want t his injustice to end very soon. I organized a vigil—
support event here in Ljubljana to show al Slovenian
people that Michael is being framed. Fans cam from al over Slovenia and even
Croatia and Bosnia and together we talked to people about t he truth of these
al egations. We spread leaflets with information and gave Mi chael al our support.

Everyone had a banner with them saying: “Michael is INNOC ENT” and some MJ

items like hats, gloves, T-
shirts, posters; I made a webpage cal JMSlo.com where I inform people about al the news that is happening with Mic ahel Jackson now. I
translate the news from English to Slovenian so people can get the right information.

I was sick and tired of reading false stories about Michael in our newspapers and that’s why I decided to do MJSlo.com.

You ask me how I know that Michael is innocent? I have bee n a Michael Jackson
fan for 17 years already and through the years I have lived a nd breathed Michael
Jackson. I got to know him through his interviews, shows, rar e footage that I have of
him, private recordings, I got to meet him live six times and talk to him, and
through al these years I have seen whatta man he is. He ha s a great heart and a
bril iant mind and I tel you there is NO WAY Michael ever did what they accuse
him of. Everyone who knows Michael personal y says the sa me. That’s just not in
Michael’s heart, he could not even think of that. It’s people with sick minds that
think like that. He is total y Innocent of any wrong doing.

To the people who already think he is guilty I would like to q uote Michael’s
saying “Don’t judge a man until you have walked in his moc casins for two weeks.”

Get the right information about these al egations, please visi t MJSlo.com and read
the truth about Michael Jackson and his life! If that’s stil not enough for you wait
and hear the truth in court. Lies run sprints, truth runs mara thons. The truth wil win this marathon!!

MCDONALD’S AND LOVE IN CHINA

From: http://www.livinginchina.copm/archives/00690.html.

He ate so little, as the two of them say knees touching, eyes on each other, oblivious to those who shared their four-
foot oval dining table. I sat uncomfortably on the child-
sized seat directly across from the lovers, my knees banging against the table with each bit of my big Mac. The 30-
something father with his three-year-old son
munched noisily through a happy meal, slurping on their dri nks, and playing with
the Nemo toy. A voyeur, I watch the lovers eat and speak th e language of love. A
year in China has erased some of my initial discomfort when forced to invade
personal space. Ten months ago my eyes would have remai ned on my food tray,
attempting to decipher the symbols and Mandarin character s describing McDonald’s
newest advertising scheme. On this day, however, I sat tran sfixed by the scene a
mere two feet before me. The university-
aged lovers (a word the Chinese apply to
boyfriend/girlfriend) shared a smal hot tea, which remained capped and unopened,

boyfriend/girlfriend) shared a smal hot tea, which remained capped and unopened,

an order of spicy McWings, a fish sandwich, and smal fries. The woman was
feasting on the chicken wing morsels; the man was feasting on the woman. He
frequently stroked her long, dark hair, placing it behind her r ight shoulder. Both her
hands were ful of food, his remained free to assist her in op ening cartons, peeling
the paper from her sandwich. Leaning into each other, they were merely a burger
distance apart as he fed her fries. I could have been on the moon. I don't understand
Putonghua, literal y common speech, however, I like to think I have slightly more success in people-
watching than most. Attempting to match non-verbal communication with words I hear repeatedly, I manage life q uite wel in China.

Besides, I was also once in love. The woman, abandoning th e spicy wings and
delicately picking up the fish sandwich (careful to keep it en cased in its paper
wrapper), spoke excitedly about some event. Gesture free, h er rich voice, ful of
inflection, pauses, and excited, high tones caused the young man to maintain
sustained eye contact, a thin mouth alternating between a s hy smile and despairing
frown. I watched him raise his eyebrows in amazement, and, final y, to laugh freely
at her completed story. She took the last bite of a shared sa ndwich that he'd not
touched. He picked up a nude French fry, offering it first to h er before licking the
salt. The tea, apparently forgotten and unattended, was gett ing cold. Chicken bones

lay discarded in a tiny heap next to the crumpled fish wrapp
er and unused ketchup
packages. I found myself part of a threesome. No longer aw
are of the little boy
sitting on the fixed stool next to me making swimming noise
s with his cheeseburger
and Nemo, I was swimming in love. The turquoise scarf she
wore shimmered under
the fluorescent light. The brown sweater he wore over layers
 of shirts added strength
and maturity to his lean frame. Her petite cel phone hung fr
om a red cord around
her neck, resting halfway down her chest. His phone shared
table space with their
food tray. Neither stopped their look of love to send text me
ssages to anyone.

Western university students eat on-the-
run at McDonald’s. Their Chinese counterparts
eat at McDonald’s with special friends or lovers—
a date place. Expensive, by Chinese standards, western-
modern, and food for the soul—not one’s health—
is the draw. A
safe, public place where diners are definitely stil part of a cr
owd, yet easy for two
people in love to carve a privacy zone just for their pleasure.
 Finishing the last of my
ketchup dressed fires (yes, they taste the same as in the US
), I gathered my trash,
wiped my hands on a rare napkin, and picked up my backpa
ck. No need to say good-
by to my dining companions; tacit acknowledgement of my
existence had
never occurred. I could have stolen their last French fry.

Comments

I guess it’s so romantic, though I can’t completely understan
d the words and sentences in the article Cheers for love

Posted by zhaojy 03/05/04

Being a Chinese boy, I have read the lovely story for three ti
mes. I wish same story in my life.

Posted by Fuwei 03/31/04

A beautiful story. I see a bigger picture involved here. The m
uch needed privacy for
young lovers in an eating place. That’s quite an achievemen
t. I remember when I
was stil dating with my wife we had a tough time finding a
private place for two young lovers. This was 5–
6 years back in Hyderabad, India. Things have changed in
India too now, the present crop of young lovers do not care
much and there are
more of them now so the number of places are increasing. A
nyway, thanks for the lovely story. Suhit

Posted by Suhit Anatula 03/31/04

It’s pathetic man, the whole article reflected how lonely you
are!

Posted by 5600hp 04/04/04

GLOBAL WEB POSTINGS BY AMERICANS

I’m starting to think there are two kinds of “world cultural pr
oduct.” There’s drive-
by tourism stuff, that gets picked up from local scenes by gl

obal entrepreneurs, like,
say the Tuareg singers at “Festival in the Desert.”

Posted by Jamais Cascio at December 5, 2003 03:07 PM

Four CD’s I listen to a lot (al a few years old now): Rachid Ta ha’s *Medina*, Hedningarna’s *Karelia Visa* (Finnish folk-inspired trance-y music), the Amores
Perros soundtrack, *Mundial Muzique* (a sampler of new Brazil ian lounge-y stuff)
Posted by Alex Steffen at December 5, 2003 03:23 PM

“Cibel e’s mentor, Suba, was Servian. Cibel e sings in Portug uese and English, and
currently lives and performs in London. Because Cibel e is a “Young World Diva.” I
didn’t realize that “Young World Divas” existed until about 4 5 seconds ago, but you
may rely upon it that I am intensely and persistently interest ed…”

And then there’s product like Cibel e, which is original y mad e by a multinational globalized polyglot diaspora.

Number one is general y better art, but number two is a lot more interesting.

Posted by: Bruce Sterling at December 5, 2003 04:47 PM

A while back, a Turkish coworker lent me a CD by Turkish fe male singer songwriter
name Nazan Ocel. I though it kicked serious ass. I have been trying to get a copy of
this disk for 6 years now. It’s been my hope that the shrinkin g world and increasing cultural cross-
pol ination would mean that I can get the rocking disks like t his from

other countries. I’d love to have some musical Marco Polo Le ighton doing that with
the Tuvan music, but I’d like to be able to get lots of the loca l music from around the world. Is anyone doing this now?

Posted by Dave Slusher at December 5, 2003 06:57 PM

I’m thinking there’s a third kind of “world cultural product,” somewhere between
the first two: derivative of things from elsewhere than the pl ace where it was made,
constructed for a specifical y local audience, but also effecti ve in a more global way
(sometimes with the aid of time). Example that comes to mi nd: the Ethiopiques
series of CDs, compiling records that came out on the tiny E thiopian label Amha in the early 70s—
half their bloodline is from traditional pentatonic music, half is from
American hard funk a la James Brown, and in 2003 they sou nd total y great. Try
vol. 3, with hits by Mahmoud Ahmed, Alèmayèhu Eshèté, Hir ut Bèqèlè, etc.

Posted by: Douglas Wolk at December 5, 2003 8:15 PM

ANTI-GLOBALIZATION PROTEST IN SEATTLE

In December 1999 a series of protests rocked Seattle on the occasion of a World
Trade Organization meeting designed to discuss tariff reduct ions and the promotion
of global trade. The fol owing passage was written by Jeffrey St. Clair, a radical
journalist and coeditor of the political newsletter Counterpu nch. The Seattle protests

foreshadowed a regular series of protests against the WTO, t
he World Bank, and other global organizations.

• • •

And the revolution wil be started by: sea turtles. At noon ab
out 2,000 people
massed at the United Methodist Church, the HQ of the grass
roots [organizations],
for a march to convention center. It was Environment Day a
nd the Earth Island
Institute had prepared more than 500 sea turtle costumes fo
r marchers to wear. The
sea turtle became the prime symbol of the WTO's threats to
environmental laws
when a WTO tribunal ruled that the U.S. Endangered Specie
s Act, which requires
shrimp to be caught with turtle excluder devices, was an unf
air trade barrier.

But the environmentalists weren't the only ones on the stree
t Monday morning. In
the first showing of a new solidarity, labor union members fr
om the Steelworkers
and the Longshoremen showed up to join the march. In fact,
 Steelworker Don Kegley
led the march, alongside environmentalist Ben White. (Whit
e was later clubbed in
the back of the head by a young man who was apparently a
ngry that he couldn't do
his Christmas shopping. The police pul ed the youth away fr
om White, but the man
wasn't arrested. White played down the incident.) The thron
g of sea turtles and blue-
jacketed union folk took off to the rhythm of a familiar chant
 that would echo down

the streets of Seattle for days: “The people wil never be divi ded!”

From Alexander Cockburn, Jeffrey St. Clair, and Alan Sekula, Five Days That Shook the World (London: Verso, 2000), 16–21.

I walked next to Brad Spann, a Longshoreman from Tacoma, who hoisted up one
of my favorite signs of the entire week: “Teamsters and Turtl es Together at last!”

Brad winked at me and said, “What the hel do you think old Hoffa [former Teamster leader] thinks of that?”

The march, which was too fast and courteous for my taste, was escorted by
motorcycle police and ended essential y in a cage, a protest pen next to a
construction site near the convention center. A large stage h ad been erected there
hours earlier and Carl Pope, the director of the Sierra Club, was cal ed forth to give
the opening speech. The Club is the nation’s most venerable environmental group.…

Standing near the stage I saw Brent Blackwelder, the head o f Friends of the Earth.

Behind his glasses and somewhat shambling manner, Black welder looks ever so
professional. And he is by far the smartest of the environme nta CEOs. But he is also
the most radical political y, the most wil ing to chal enge the tired complacency of his fel ow green executive.…

After the speechifying most of the marchers headed back to the church. But a
contingent of about 200 ended up in front of McDonald’s wh ere a group of French
farmers had mustered to denounce U.S. policy on biotech fo ods. Their leader was
José Bove, a sheep farmer from Mil au in southwest France a nd a leader of
Confederation Paysanne, a French environmental group. In A ugust, Bove had been
jailed in France for leading a raid on a McDonald’s restauran t under construction in
Larzac. At the time, he was already awaiting charges that he destroyed a cache of
Novartis’ genetical y engineered corn. Bove said his raid on the Larzac McDonald’s
was promoted by the U.S. decision to impose a heavy tariff on Roquefort cheese in
retaliation for the European Union’s refusal to import Americ an hormone-treated
beef. Bove’s act of defiance earned him the praise of Jacque s Chirac and Friends of
the Earth. Bove said he was prepared to start a militant worl dwide campaign against

“Frankenstein” foods. “These actions wil only stop when thi s mad logic comes to a
halt,” Bove said. “I don’t demand clemency but justice.”

Bove showed up at the Seattle McDonald’s with rounds of R oquefort cheese,

Bove showed up at the Seattle McDonald’s with rounds of R oquefort cheese,
which he handed out to the crowd. After listening to a rousin g speech against the

evils of Monsanto, and its bovine growth hormone and Roun dupReady Soybeans, the
crowd stormed the McDonald’s breaking its windows and ur ging customers and
workers to join the marchers on the streets. This was the firs t shot in the battle for Seattle.

Who were these direct action warriors on the front lines? Ear th First, the Al iance
for Sustainable Jobs and the Environment (the new enviro- steelworker al iance), the
Ruckus Society (a direct action training center), Jobs with Jus tice, Rainforest Action
Network, Food Not Bombs, Global Exchange, and a smal co ntingent of Anarchists, the dreaded Black Bloc.

There was also a robust international contingent on the stre ets Tuesday morning:
French farmers, Korean greens [environmentalists], Canadia n wheat growers,
Mexican environmentalists, Chinese dissidents, Ecuadorian anti-dam organizers, U’wa tribes-
people from the Columbian rainforest, and British campaign ers against
genetical y modified foods. Indeed earlier, a group of Brits h ad cornered two
Monsanto lobbyists behind an abandoned truck carrying an ad for the Financial
Times. They detained the corporate flacks long enough to d eliver a stern warning about the threat of franken-
crops to wildlife, such as the Monarch butterfly. Then a wave of tear gas wafted over them and the Monsanto men fl ed, covering their eyes with their neckties.

Around 12:30 someone smashed the first storefront window. It could have been

an anarchist. It could have been an agent provocateur or stray bullet or concussion grenade. What's clear, though, is that the vandalism—what there was of it—started more than two hours after the cops had attacked nonviolent protesters amassed at 6th and Union; protesters who had offered themselves up for arrest. At most, the dreaded Black Bloc, which was to become demonized by the press and some of the more staid leaders of labor and green groups, amounted to 50 people, many of them young women. Much of the so-called looting that took place was done not by the Anarchists, but by Seattle street gangs.

As the march turned up toward the Sheraton and was beaten back by cops on horses, I teamed up with Etienne Vernet and Ronnie Cumming. Cumming is the head of one of the feistiest groups in the U.S., the Pure Food Campaign, Monsanto's chief pain in the ass. Cumming hails from the oil town of Port Arthur, Texas. He went to Cambridge with another great foe of industrial agriculture, Prince Charles. Cumming was a civil rights organizer in Houston during the mid-sixties. "The energy here is incredible," Cumming said. "Black and white, labor and green, Americans, Europeans, Africans, and Asians arm in arm. It's the most hopeful I've felt since the height of the civil rights movement.

Vernet lives in Paris, where he is the leader of the radical green group EcoRopa.

At that very moment the European delegates inside the con vention were capitulating
on a key issue: The EU, which had banned import of genetic al y engineered crops and hormone-
treated beef, had agreed to a U.S. proposal to establish a sci entific
committee to evaluate the health and environmental risks of biotech foods, a sure
first step toward undermining the moratorium. Stil Vernet w as in a jol y mood,
lively and invigorated, if a little bemused by the decorous na ture of the crowd.

“Americans seem to have been out of practice in these thing s,” he told me.

“Everyone’s so polite. The only things on fire are dumpsters fil ed with refuse.” He
pointed to a shiny black Lexus parked on Pine Street, which throngs of protesters
had scrupulously avoided. In the windshield was a placard id entifying it as

had scrupulously avoided. In the windshield was a placard id entifying it as
belonging to a WTO delegate. “In Paris that car would be bur ning.”

AMERICANISM AND CONSUMERISM

The fol owing passage comes from Adbusters Magazine, in 2 006. It reflects the
decline of the United States in world opinion, after the invasi on of Iraq and other
developments, and offers an interesting opportunity to look at the relationship

between world opinion and consumerism and to examine co rporate strategies to
deal with new complexities in the global market.

• • •

A marketing study released early this year puts a pretty sav age point on the
dilemma. Based on research conducted in the summer of 20 05, Chicago branding
agency Energy BBDO ranked the “likeability” of 54 global y- marketed brands
amongst 13 to 18 years olds from a bakers dozen of countri es, including the United States.

Of the big brands with roots in the USA, just five—
Nike, Colgate, Coca-Cola, M&Ms and Kodak—
made it into the top ten. Contrast this with ten years ago, w hen
a comparable study conducted by D’Arcy Masius Benton & B owles discovered near-
total supremacy of US brands over the much-
desired teen demographic, capturing
eight of the top ten “likeability” slots.

It’s clear that name recognition is not to blame for the decli ne. In the new study,
McDonalds ranked second for name recognition, respectivel y, yet not even breaking the top twenty for likeability.

“An association with the US seemed to be a drag on the like ability of brands,
despite high logo recognition,” noted Chip Walker, executive vice president at
Energy BBDO, in a January interview with Women’s Wear Dai

ly. “There seems to be
a great ambivalence towards America among global teens.”

While none of this spel s out-and-
out doom for US brands, being forced to stop
drinking from the poisoned wel has left marketers scrambli
ng to uncover new formulas for generating teen cool.

Of the US entries in the current top ten, Nike has perhaps be
en the most
aggressive in shedding its mantle of Americana in favor of “l
ocalizing” itself across
the world. Hence the ongoing Joga Bonito (Play Beautiful) ca
mpaign, featuring the
likes of Brazilian footbal er Ronaldnho Gaúcho and the retire
d French icon Eric Cantona.

From Clayton Dach, “Global Teens Growing Indifferent to ‘Br
and America,’”

Adbusters Magazine,

http://www.adbusters.org/the_magazine/66/Global_Teens_Gr
owing.

Hence, also, Nike’s move to acquire other brands that alread
y enjoy local cache—as with Canadian hockey-
equipment manufacturer Bauer, now Nike Bauer—or its new,
$43-
mil ion sponsorship deal with India’s national cricket team.

In a roundabout way, then, it may be tempting to prophesy t
hat the Brand
America crisis could ultimately be a boon to those US brand
s that have been
coasting on borrowed cool, obliging them to fabricate more r

esilient, bespoke
identities that are better suited to emerging markets.

Tempting, yes, but likely also a tad hasty, given another maj or finding of the
Energy BBDO study. “Marketers facing big trouble,” note the study’s authors, “62

percent of global teens are apathetic about marketing and a dvertising. That is, they

percent of global teens are apathetic about marketing and a dvertising. That is, they are not anti-
brand, but perhaps more dangerously, they just don’t care—don’t care
about wearing brand logos, don’t believe advertising, and fe el there is too much advertising in the world.”

This isn’t a smal matter of a few errant kids. The global tee n market is huge and growing—
in 2002, worth approximately $170 bil ion in the States alon e. More
trenchantly, adolescence is regarded as the ideal moment t o begin cultivating

“positive consideration” and brand loyalty, right at the mom ent when kids begin to
make independent purchasing decisions. No wonder, then, t hat the specter of a disinterested, brand-
apathetic teen is to a marketer what root rot is to a gardene r: a sign of trouble, “dangerous” things to come.

Comments

I for one, speaking as a 17 year old, can understand being c ompletely indifferent to
brands. I work for minimum wage, and what I do with my m oney is strongly
weighted on price as wel as smart consumerism. I think tha t habit wil only be
solidified as I grow older. Why save my money for an overpri ced piece of designer
clothing made in a sweatshop when I can buy cheaper, high er quality goods from a local source? Vance

I would love to think that US branding is on its way out, how ever, branding has
proven to reinvent itself time and time again. Has anyone el se ever heard of
consumers being compared to roaches? Eventual y, the con sumer is so oversaturated
with advertising that the cooperations wil find more and mo re invasive ways to
spray the consumer with their poison. If we are not careful, we wil al end up living
corporately sponsored lives. A gross exaggeration of what is slowly happening.

Hilde

I understand how teenage apathy could deteriorate the profi
ts of various brand
names. However, is not a move away from exasperated con
sumerism and American
domination a positive thing? If teenagers are buying what th
ey like and what is
functional and attracts them despite the brand name isn’t m
arket competition becoming more legitimate and less blind?

Sara

It is sad but true. After spending 17 years in the US, I came back to Pakistan. During
my teen days, everyone wanted to go to the US for educatio n but now 90% want to
go to UK or Australia. If you ask them why, most of the time there is same answer.

Cultural y US has gone backwards and they have alienated t hemselves.

Usman

Many Americans already live branded lives: their clothing, p
ersonal grooming
products, automobiles, and even speech habits (vocabulary,
 phrasing, etc.) and
dietary practices are influenced heavily by what they see on
 television. How many
times have I heard “talk to the hand,” “take it to the next le
vel,” and “been there, done that, got the t-
shirt,” al of which appear to be the common tongue of talk
show hosts like Oprah, etc?

Jon Koppenhoefer

I know things are different in China. Young people like big br
ands much more than
others. Megalopolis culture holds that one lives better than
other people through

“excel ence” brands.

Zhaisi

I find myself hating many of the brands on that list. I’ve foun
d that brands with
recognition, like Sony and the like, skimp on any kind of qual
ity in their products.

Liking a big brand doesn’t set you apart from anyone and cr
eate individuality, but finding a little no-
name with great products gives you identity.

Garrett

The truth is, even though American brands are fal ing out of favor, European and
Asian consumerist brands wil just pick up the slack. The ne ws is an indicator of the decline in America's appeal—
but it is not warming news about the reduction of consumerism.

E.J.

I bet I can guess why Colgate is high on the list. I think it's b ecause of the tooth
whitening stuff. But yea, I've always disliked wearing stuff w ith brandnames on
display I just don't find it very stylish and the thinking that t hings are cooler just
because what brand they are. I stil don't have an Ipod, or a cel phone. But I don't
real y care! I get them when I need them, or have enough m oney. Also, ditto on the
comment about how brands trying too hard is unattractive. I saw a commercial for
Nike in the movies and it was about getting more air. Like I' m gonna fly if I wear those.

BLF

Some states in India just banned Coke and Pepsi products b
ecause they contain
pesticides, 24x higher than the agreed limit. This wil accele
rate their brand deterioration outside of the US.

Chad

I completely agree on the strong anti-
American trend with teens at the moment, but
I think that most teens do not real y think about which count ry the company they
are buying is rooted. Although this does exclude some of the largest companies that
are very wel known for having US roots (e.g. Nike, McDonal ds, Coca-Cola, etc.).

CHAPTER 35

TERRORISM AND ANTI-TERRORISM

The final decades of the twentieth century were fil ed with p eriodic encounters with
terrorism. These spil ed over, massively, to the twenty-
first century when on
September 11, 2001, nineteen terrorists commandeered fou r commercial airplanes in
the United States and flew three of them into landmark buil dings, the World Trade
Center in New York and the Pentagon near Washington, DC. Approximately three thousand people died.

Along with globalization, terrorism becomes a central world history topic after
the end of the Cold War. It raises huge questions about relati onships among major
civilizations, and it complicates any definition of globalizatio n.

Terrorism is not easy to define or explain. It often involves vi olence by groups
who believe their cause is just but who face opposition from

a superior force. It often targets civilians, using modern technologies such as car bombs or hijacked airplanes. The most widespread terrorism in the early twenty-first century emanated from extremist Muslim groups protesting Western activities in the Middle East, including Israeli treatment of Palestinians. While some Western leaders simply condemned terrorism, others, while also condemning criminal tactics, urged an understanding of the motives involved as part of mounting opposition strategies.

The six passages that follow invite several kinds of comparison. The first is obvious: the huge differences in viewpoint between those who advocate terror and Western leaders who oppose it. What are the key premises in both camps? How do the assumptions of one group help explain those of the other? The second comparison, still involving the two camps, asks whether there are differences of approach within them—between British and American leaders or between self-styled terrorist leaders and those who carry out attacks directly. Finally, the third cluster of two documents explores positions of groups in the middle—opposed to terrorism but also concerned about excesses in response. Comparing this approach to the two more extreme camps raises the more subtle comparative question of whether any middle way is possible.

Questions

1. What was bin Laden’s interpretation of Islam? How did he justify violence against the United States?

2. What were the emphases of the 9/11 terrorists? How do t hey compare to bin Laden’s approach?

3. How can international terrorism best be defined? Why do some people find a definition difficult?

4. What were Tony Blair’s main arguments against terrorism ? What strategy does he
suggest? How does his approach compare with that of Presi dent Bush?

5. How did the U.N. react to terrorism? What difficulties did i t have in taking out a clear position?

6. How does Ramadan’s argument compare to the definition s of Islam by bin Laden
and the terrorists? To the arguments at Blair and Bush?

7. Is it possible to think of a settlement between the extrem es where terrorism is

7. Is it possible to think of a settlement between the extrem es where terrorism is involved?

For Further Discussion

1. Wil terrorism and the struggle against it be the dominant issue of the twenty-first century?

OSAMA BIN LADEN’S DECREE AND THOUGHTS BY 9/11 TERR ORISTS

The first document is a 1998 fatwa, or decree, by Osama bin Laden, the leader of the al Qaeda terrorist group; it was widely publicized. The second document is a letter left by several of the hijackers of the 9/11 flights, according to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Los Angles Times published a translation on September 29, 2001.

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OSAMA BIN LADEN'S DECREE

The Arabian Peninsula has never—
since God made it flat, created its desert, and
encircled it with seas—
been stormed by any forces like the crusader armies
spreading in it like locusts, eating its riches and wiping out its plantations. All this is happening at a time in which nations are attacking Muslims like people fighting over a plate of food. In the light of the grave situation and the lack of support, we and you are obliged to discuss current events, and we should all agree on how to settle the matter.

No one argues today about facts that are known to everyone; we will list them, in order to remind everyone:

[For example], for over seven years the United States has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest places, the Arabian Peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbors, and turning

its basis in the Peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighboring Muslim peoples.

Al these crimes and sins committed by the Americans are a clear declaration of war on God, his messenger, and Muslims. And ulema have throughout Islamic history unanimously agreed that the Jihad is an individual duty if the enemy destroys the Muslim countries. This was revealed by Imam Bin-Qadamah in “Al-Mughni,” Imam al-Kisai in “Al-Badai,” al-Qurtubi in his interpretation, and the shaykh of al-Islam in his books, where he said: “As for the fighting to repulse [an enemy], it is aimed at defending sanctity and religion, and it is a duty as agreed [by the ulema]. Nothing is more sacred than belief except repulsing an enemy who is attacking religion and life.”

On that basis, and in compliance with God’s order, we issue the following fatwa to all Muslims:

The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies—civilians and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim. This is in accordance with the words of Almighty God, “and fight the pagans all together as they fight you all together,” and

“fight them until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in God.”

Thoughts by 9/11 Terrorists

When you board the plane, remember that this is a battle in the sake of God, which
is worth the whole world and al that is in it. As the Messeng er (peace and blessings be upon him) has said.

When you sit in your seat, invoke the known supplications, a nd then be confident
with the remembrance of God. “O you who believe, if you m eet an army, then stand
firm and invoke God much so that you may prosper.”

And know that the Gardens of Paradise are beautified with it s best ornaments,
and its inhabitants are cal ing you. And if… do not let differe nces come between
you, and listen and obey, and if you kil , then kil completely , because this is the way of the Chosen One.

On condition that… there is something greater than paying attention to the
enemy or attacking him, because the harm in this is much g reater. For the priority of
the action of the group is much more important, since this is the duty of your
mission. Don’t take revenge for yourself only, but make your strike and everything
on the basis of doing it for the sake of God.

PRIME MINISTER BLAIR’S SPEECH AND PRESIDENT BUSH’S S PEECH

The first document below is from an October 2, 2001, speec h by British Prime
Minister Tony Blair, shortly before his nation joined the Unite d States in an attack

on Afghanistan as the center of terrorist activities. The seco
nd document is from the
February 2002 State of the Union address by President Geor
ge W. Bush, delivered
shortly after the radical Islamic regime in Afghanistan had b
een defeated; this was
the speech in which the president not only attacked terrorist
s but also condemned
Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as an “axis of evil” because their
weapons threatened the United States.

• • •

BLAIR’S SPEECH

So, what do we do?

Don’t overreact some say. We aren’t

We haven’t lashed out. No missiles on the first night just for
effect.

Don’t kil innocent people. We are not the ones who waged
war on the innocent.

We seek the guilty.

Look for a diplomatic solution. There is no diplomacy with Bi
n Laden or the Taliban regime.

State an ultimatum and get their response. We stated the ul
timatum; they haven’t responded.

Understand the causes of terror. Yes, we should try, but let t
here be no moral
ambiguity about this: nothing could ever justify the events o

f 11 September, and it is
to turn justice on its head to pretend it could.

The action we take wil be proportionate; targeted, we wil d o al we humanly can
to avoid civilian casualties. But understand what we are deal ing with. Listen to the
cal s of those passengers on the planes. Think of the childre n on them, told they were going to die.

There is no compromise possible with such people, no meeti ng of minds, no point

There is no compromise possible with such people, no meeti ng of minds, no point of understanding with such terror.

Just a choice: defeat it or be defeated by it. And defeat it we must.

When we act to bring to account those that committed the a trocity of September 11, we do so, not out of bloodlust.

We do so because it is just. We do not act against Islam. The true fol owers of
Islam are our brothers and sisters in this struggle. Bin Laden is no more obedient to
the proper teaching of the Koran than those Crusaders of th e 12th century who
pil aged and murdered, represented the teaching of the Gos pel.

It is time the west confronted its ignorance of Islam. Jews, M uslims and Christians are al children of Abraham.

This is the moment to bring the faiths closer together in und erstanding of our

common values and heritage, a source of unity and strength
.

So I believe this is a fight for freedom. And I want to make it a fight for justice
too. Justice not only to punish the guilty. But justice to bring those same values of
democracy and freedom to people round the world.

BUSH’S SPEECH

Our cause is just, and it continues. We have seen the depth of our enemies’ hatred in
videos, where they laugh about the loss of innocent life. And the depth of our
enemies’ hatred is equaled by the madness of the destructi on they design. [In
Afghanistan] we have found diagrams of American nuclear p ower plants and public
water facilities, detailed instructions for making chemical we apons, surveil ance
maps of American cities, and thorough descriptions of land marks in America and
throughout the world What we have found confirms that, far from ending, our war
against terror is only beginning. Most of the 19 men who hij acked planes on
September the 11th were trained in Afghanistan’s camps, a nd so were tens of
thousands of others. Thousands of dangerous kil ers, school ed in the methods of
murder, often supported by outlaw regimes, are now spread throughout the world
like ticking time bombs, set to go off without warning.

Our nation wil continue to be steadfast and patient and per sistent in the pursuit
of two great objectives. First, we wil shut down terrorist ca mps, disrupt terrorist
plans, and bring terrorists to justice. And, second, we must p revent the terrorists and
regimes who seek chemical, biological or nuclear weapons fr om threatening the United States and the world.

We wil work closely with our coalition to deny terrorists and their state sponsors
the materials, technology, and expertise to make and delive r weapons of mass
destruction. We wil develop and deploy effective missile def enses to protect
America and our al ies from sudden attack. And al nations s hould know: America
wil do what is necessary to ensure our nation’s security. We ’l be deliberate, yet
time is not on our side. I wil not wait on events, while dange rs gather. I wil not
stand by, as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America wil not
permit the world’s most dangerous regimes to threaten us w ith the world’s most destructive weapons.

LESLIE PALTI AND TARIQ RAMADAN

The first document below, by an international relations expe rt, Leslie Palti, sums up
United Nations discussions. Published in 2006, it is not an off icial U.N. statement.

United Nations discussions. Published in 2006, it is not an off icial U.N. statement.

The second document is also from 2006, an article by the S
wiss Muslim Tariq
Ramadan, a leading European Muslim intel ectual who earlie
r had been offered a
faculty position by Notre Dame University that he had been
unable to assume
because the U.S. government would not al ow him to enter t
he country.

• • •

LESLIE PALTI

The United Nations unequivocal y condemns terrorism in al
its forms as a violation
of human rights. However, finding a rights-
based approach to fighting it has been
less obvious. The anti-
terrorism debate hinges on finding the right balance betwee
n
human rights protection and effective security measures. Ar
e effective counter
terrorism measures compatible with the ful respect for fund
amental freedoms? Is it
necessary for States to make compromises and infringe on t
he rule of law in order to
better protect their population from the threat of terrorism?
In November 2002, Secretary-
General Kofi Annan noted that the 11 September 2001 terro
rist attacks
have exacerbated the dilemma, “where an understandable f
ocus on preventing stil
more terrible terrorist acts has increased concerns about the
price we must pay in
terms of cherished rights and liberties.” He added: “We face
a nearly unsolvable

conflict between two imperatives of modern life—protecting the traditional civil liberties of our citizens, and at the same time ensuring their safety from terrorist attacks with catastrophic consequences." Particular attention needed to be given to balancing anti-terrorism measures and the observance of human rights standards, Mr. Annan said, otherwise the fight against terrorism would be "self-defeating." For the United Nations, respect for human rights remains an integral part of any comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy. UN guidelines to help States strike a balance between human rights and combating terrorism have been established in a number of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, Security Council and Commission on Human Rights. These resolutions stress that "States must ensure that any measures taken to combat terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law and should adopt such measure in accordance with international law."

The Chal enge of Defining Terrorism

Fighting terrorism has been a long-standing concern of the General Assembly.

Beginning in 1963, the United Nations has focused on building a legal framework to eliminate international terrorism and, to date, there are twelve major multilateral conventions about terrorism that constitute the main element of international law.

However, despite this progress, one of the central chal enge s facing the Assembly has
been the definition of terrorism itself. Each of the twelve con ventions relies on an

“operational” definition, based on specific terrorist “activitie s.” Thus, separate
treaties exist to address issues such as bombings, hijackings , hostage-taking and
covert financing of terrorist activities, but a universal definiti on has yet to be adopted.

Since 1996, the Assembly’s Sixth (Legal) Committee has wo rked on drafting a
comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which wil include a
definition of terrorism. However, negotiations remain stal ed due to disagreements
between States on how to distinguish liberation movements from terrorist cel s.

Thus, until States resolve the adage that “one man’s terroris t is another man’s
freedom fighter,” the debate over a universal definition of te rrorism wil continue.

TARIQ RAMADAN, “THE GLOBAL IDEOLOGY OF FEAR”

When we examine the countries of the West or those of the South, particularly where
the population is primarily Muslim, we can only conclude tha t fear is omnipresent
and deeply ingrained. It is having an unmistakable impact o n the way human beings
perceive the world. We can observe at street level three prin ciple effects:

First, fear, natural y and often unconsciously, breeds mistrus t and potential
conflict with the “Other.” A binary vision of reality begins to i mpose the outlines of
a protective “us” and of a threatening “them.”

The second effect derives form the absolute domination of e motions in our
relationships with the Other and of emotional responses to e vents. When fear rules,
emotions undermine rational analysis. In such a state, we co ndemn the consequences
of some actions and reject the individuals who commit it, bu t we don’t seek to understand what led to such action....

If we broaden our focus, we see a world that reflects these s ame considerations
and postures. The “war” that has been unleashed to destroy terrorism is now
founded on the same logical bases, but on a global scale.

Don’t get me wrong. Terror is a fact, not an ideology, and th e kil ing of innocent
people must be condemned with no exception. It is the ideol ogical use of its
consequences that is problematic. The American neo-conservatives and their
European imitators instigate and nurture a permanent sense of fear, which they
wield as though it were an ideology. Their policies are based on a feeling of
insecurity and a binary vision of the world. The imperative is one of self-protection,
sometimes through draconian security policies that are hosti le to freedom and, for

some, openly unjust and discriminatory. After al , the West h as become the

“principal victim of terrorism.”

We must break the bonds of our fear, master our impulse to see things only in
black and white and recapture our critical spirit and our abili ty to listen. We must
once more become thinking “subjects”—
that and nothing else. And yet, to do so seems so difficult.

Muslims, whether they live in the West or in primarily Musli m countries, cannot
under any circumstances endorse the ideology of fear, nor c an they fal into the trap
of a polarized, simplistic and caricatured reading of the worl d. By perpetuating the
idea, which has now become an obsession, that they are eit her dominated (or
members of a minority) and unappreciated or singled out an d marginalized, they
unconsciously accept the premises of those who propagate t his emotion-based
ideology, of those who seek to build wal s and dig trenches, of those who promote
prejudices, fuel insecurity and fan the fires of conflict. These propagandists of fear
tirelessly spread the idea that Islam and Muslims are threate ned by the future; by
al owing themselves to be swept into a vicious circle of self- justification and
defensiveness, Muslims confirm and lend credence to a deb ate whose terms have been deliberately skewed….

We must make an effort to educate ourselves in order to bri ng together the search
for meaning and for God and respect for the principles of jus tice, freedom and
human fraternity. Against the temptation to close ourselves off, to see reality in
black and white, we need an “intel ectual jihad.” We need to resist (jihad means,
literal y, effort and resistance), to strive for the universality of a message that
transcends the particular and al ows us to understand the c ommon universal values that make up our horizon….

The original spirit of the message of Islam is an invitation to us; it teaches us to

The original spirit of the message of Islam is an invitation to us; it teaches us to
open ourselves to the world, to make ours what is good (wh atever its origin). It
teaches us to understand that each of us has multiple, fluct uating identities, that
diversity is a school for humility and respect, and that huma nity is one, just as God is One.

CHAPTER 36

GLOBAL WARMING AND GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTALISM

Humans have affected the environment at least since the be ginning of agriculture,
sometimes with disastrous consequences. Industrialization i n the nineteenth century
accelerated the potential for environmental change, with de teriorations of air

quality around factory centers and massive chemical spil s r unning into rivers.

Industrialization also indirectly prompted new environmental developments outside the industrial world, as planters scrambled to introduce crop s like cotton or coffee in regions where they might worsen soil quality or encourag e new erosion. With al this, it was only in the later twentieth century that humankin d developed the indisputable capacity to affect global environmental conditio ns, and not just regional patterns. Efforts to distribute pol ution through gian t smokestacks, for example, produced acid rain that might damage forests in di stant areas—thus Germany could affect Scandinavia and the American Midwes t could touch Canada and New England.

Increased production of carbon dioxide and the reduction of tropical rain forests combined, in the judgment of most experts, to begin to rais e the temperature of the earth, probably as early as the nineteenth century and certa inly by the twentieth century. Concern mounted about possible increases in the le vels of oceans, damage to a variety of species, and possibly more violent weather, a l as a result of what became known as global warming.

Also in the later twentieth century, new kinds of global politi cal efforts became possible to address climate issues. The United Nations and o ther agencies cal ed

conferences and encouraged new agreements to reduce air pol ution.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) like Greenpeace aro se to stimulate world
opinion and policymakers to take a more constructive enviro nmental role.

(Greenpeace was founded in 1971, initial y to resist nuclear testing; its
environmental concerns shifted by 2000.) Key international i nitiatives included the
Kyoto agreements, from 1997, setting limits on greenhouse gas emissions by the
industrial nations; these agreements had been ratified by ov er 150 countries by 2006

—including Japan, Russia, and the European Union—
but the United States held back.

Al this occurred amid ongoing debate and some striking diff erences in levels of
concern. Scientists did not always agree with each other on the data involved.

Politicians and general publics varied in their response. Amo ng other things, an
obvious gulf arose between the United States and other ind ustrial societies that
produced mutual bad feeling and prevented ful internationa l accord.

The fol owing documents suggest some of the positions invo lved, ranging from
environmental advocacy to official American resistance. The re are three sets: first,
two scholars, writing in the 1990s, set up obviously contrasti

ng views of recent
global experience and global prospects. Then more recent m aterials raise the policy
issues associated with global warming directly. Comparison i n this sense is
straightforward, but it invites more subtle analysis about the extent of basic
differences, about the reasons for the differences, and, possi bly, about how the
differences might be resolved. Final y, a third set provides re cent data on pol utant emissions and opinion pol s.

Questions

1. What are the main contrasts between the approaches of Simon and Myers? How
can two presumably reasonable scholars disagree so comple tely?

2. How does current American environmental policy compar e to the positions of Simon and of Myers?

3. What are the key reasons American policymakers have re sisted global cal s for
international agreements to reduce pol utant emission?

4. What is the role of NGOs like Greenpeace in the environm ental debate? How do
Greenpeace’s goals compare to those of the United States?

5. What is the relationship between policy and policy statem ents, on one hand, and
actual levels of pol ution, on the other?

6. How do international opinion pol s relate to different natio nal policies? Which
comes first, the policy or the public attitude?

For Further Discussion

1. Why are Americans less concerned about global warming than people in most other parts of the world?

2. Are there ways to reconcile the American and the internat ional approaches? Is the disagreement significant for United States's interests?

3. How does modern environmental history fit into world hist ory more general y?

How does it fit into a historical understanding of globalizatio n?

A BASIC DEBATE

Julian Simon is a professor of business administration in the United States who has written widely on issues of population growth. Norman Myer s, British born but partly educated in the United States, works mainly on the pr eservation of animal species; he has served as advisor to the World Bank and the World Wildlife Association. The debate from which the fol owing materials derive was held at Columbia University in 1992.

• • •

JULIAN SIMON

The gloom-and-doom about a "crisis" of our environment is al wrong on the scientific facts. Even the Environmental Protection Agency a cknowledges that our air

and water have been getting cleaner rather than dirtier in th e past few decades.

Every agricultural economist knows that the world's populati on has been eating ever
better since World War II. Every resource economist knows t hat al natural resources
have been getting more available rather than more scarce, as shown by their fal ing
prices over the decades and centuries. And every demograp her knows that the death
rate has been fal ing al over the world—
life expectancy almost tripling in the rich
countries in the past two centuries, and almost doubling in t he poor countries in just the past four decades.

The picture also is now clear that population growth does no t hinder economic
development. In the 1980s there was a complete reversal in the consensus of
thinking of population economists about the effects of more people. In 1986, the
National Research Council and the National Academy of Scie nces completely
overturned their "official" view away from the earlier worrie d view expressed in

overturned their "official" view away from the earlier worrie d view expressed in
1971. They noted the absence of any statistical evidence of a negative connection
between population increase and economic growth. And the y said that "The scarcity
of exhaustible resources is at most a minor restraint on econ omic growth."…

The most important and amazing demographic fact—
the greatest human achievement in history, in my view—
is the decrease in the world's death rate....

Let's put it differently. In the nineteenth century, the planet Earth could sustain
only 1 bil ion people. Ten thousand years ago, only 4 mil ion could keep themselves
alive. Now, more than 5 bil ion people are living longer and more healthily than
ever before, on average. The increase in the world's populat ion represents our victory over death.

I would expect lovers of humanity to jump with joy at this tri umph of human
mind and organization over the kil ing forces of nature. Inste ad, many lament that
there are so many people alive to enjoy the gift of life. Some even express regret over the fal in the death rate....

From Norman Myers and Julian L. Simon, Scarcity or Abunda nce? A Debate on the
Environment (New York, W.W. Norton, 1994).

So by any measure, natural resources have been getting mo re available rather than more scarce.

When we take a long-
run view, the picture is different, and considerably more complex, from the simple short run view of more people imp lying lower average
income. In the very long run, more people almost surely imp ly more available
resources and a higher income for everyone.

I suggest you test this proposition as fol ows:

Do you think that our standard of living would be as high as it is now if the
population had never grown from about 4 mil ion human bei ngs perhaps 10,000

years ago? I don’t think we’d now have electric light or gas heat or autos or
penicil in or travel to the Moon or our present life expectanc y of over seventy years at birth in rich countries—
in comparison to the life expectancy of twenty to twenty-five years at birth in earlier eras—
if population had not grown to its present
numbers. If population had never grown, instead of the plea sant lunch you had, you
would have been chasing rabbits and digging roots.

NORMAN MYERS

I believe that, by contrast with Julian Simon, we are at a wat ershed in human history because of the grand-
scale environmental degradation that is overtaking our planet in conjunction with excessive population growth and consumerism. Unless we
change these trends and patterns, we are going to have a to ugh time of it. And not
only us, but dozens and hundreds of human generations int o the future. In fact, in
the case of mass extinction of species, as many as 200,000 generations to come wil
be impoverished because of what we are doing during the p resent few decades.…

What do I mean when I speak of prospective environmental ruin worldwide? Let
me give you a few quick statistics, al of them supported by reports from the World

Bank, United Nations agencies, the Rockefel er Foundation, and organizations of
similar reputable sort. Soil erosion: during the past year we have lost 25 bil ion tons of topsoil around the world—
and it’s as severe in parts of Indiana as in India. This
lost topsoil has cost us 9 mil ion tons of grain, enough to ma ke up the diets of wel
over 200 mil ion people who are “undernourished” (the jarg on term for people who are semi-
starving). Also during the past year we have lost 150,000 sq uare kilometers

are semi-
starving). Also during the past year we have lost 150,000 sq uare kilometers
of tropical forest, taking with them a host of watershed servi ces. The economic costs
are sizeable: in the Ganges Val ey alone in India, deforestati on in the Himalayan
foothil s causes downstream flooding that imposes costs tha t, according to the
Government of India, amount to wel over $1 bil ion per year . During the past year,
too, desertification has totaled 60,000 square kilometers, ta king out agricultural
lands with potential food output worth $42 bil ion.

Also during the past year, we have lost tens of thousands of species, again with an
economic cost. When you visit your neighborhood pharmacy , there is one chance in
two that the product on the counter before you would not be there if it were not for
startpoint materials from wild plants and animals. The com mercial value of these
products is more than $40 bil ion a year. Think, then, of wha

t we are losing when
we hear of tens of thousands of species disappearing every year.

In the past year too, we have depleted the ozone layer stil f urther. We have taken a solid step toward a greenhouse-affected world. And at the same time our Earth has
taken on board another 93 mil ion people, equivalent to mor e than a “new Mexico”—
and this at a time when our Earth is straining under the burd en of its present population of 5.5 bil ion people….

POLICY VIEWS

UNITED STATES

The two documents in this section involve a statement by Pr esident George W. Bush
in 2001 and a brief policy summary from the U.S. Environme ntal Protection Agency in 2002.

• • •

Text of a Let er from the President to Senators Hagel, Helms, Craig, and Roberts.

Thank you for your letter asking for the Administration’s vie ws on global climate
change, in particular the Kyoto Protocol and efforts to regula te carbon dioxide
under the Clean Air Act. My Administration takes the issue of global climate change very seriously.

As you know, I oppose the Kyoto Protocol because it exempt s 80 percent of the
world, including major population centers such as China and India, from

compliance, and would cause serious harm to the U.S. econ
omy. The Senate’s vote, 95-
0, shows that there is a clear consensus that the Kyoto Proto
col is an unfair and
ineffective means of addressing global climate change conc
erns.

As you also know, I support a comprehensive and balanced
national energy policy
that takes into account the importance of improving air qual
ity. Consistent with this
balanced approach, I intend to work with the Congress on a
multipol utant strategy
to require power plants to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide
, nitrogen oxides, and
mercury. Any such strategy would include phasing in reducti
ons over a reasonable
period of time, providing regulatory certainty, and offering
market-based incentives
to help industry meet the targets. I do not believe, however,
 that the government
should impose on power plants mandatory emissions reducti
ons for carbon dioxide,
which is not a “pol utant” under the Clean Air Act.

From: http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/03/20
010314.html.

A recently released Department of Energy Report, “Analysis
of Strategies for
Reducing Multiple Emissions from Power Plants,” concluded
that including caps on

Reducing Multiple Emissions from Power Plants,” concluded
that including caps on
carbon dioxide emissions as part of a multiple emissions str

ategy would lead to an
even more dramatic shift from coal to natural gas for electri
c power generation and
significantly higher electricity prices compared to scenarios i
n which only sulfur
dioxide and nitrogen oxides were reduced.

This is important new information that warrants a reevaluati
on, especial y at a
time of rising energy prices and a serious energy shortage.
Coal generates more than
half of America's electricity supply. At a time when California
 has already
experienced energy shortages, and other Western states are
 worried about price and
availability of energy this summer, we must be very careful
not to take actions that
could harm consumers. This is especial y true given the inco
mplete state of scientific
knowledge of the causes of, and solutions to, global climate
change and the lack of
commercial y available technologies for removing and storin
g carbon dioxide.

Consistent with these concerns, we wil continue to ful y exa
mine global climate change issues—
including the science, technologies, market-
based systems, and
innovative options for addressing concentrations of greenho
use gases in the
atmosphere. I am very optimistic that, with the proper focus
 and working with our
friends and al ies, we wil be able to develop technologies,
market incentives, and
other creative ways to address global climate change.

I look forward to working with you and others to address glo bal climate change
issues in the context of a national energy policy that protect s our environment, consumers, and economy.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Environmental Protection Agency

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION’S ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPH Y

The focus is on results—
making our air, water, and land cleaner.

We need to employ the best science and data to inform our decision-making.

From

http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/environment/key_bush_environmental_accomplishments.pdf.

Our policies should encourage innovation and the development of new, cleaner technologies.

We should continue to build on America's ethic of stewardship and personal
responsibility through education and volunteer opportunies, and in our daily lives.

Opportunities for environmental improvements are not limited to Federal Government actions—
states, tribes, local communities, and individuals must be included.

BUILDING ON OUR GREAT ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS

Over the last 30 years, our Nation has made great progress in providing for a better
environment and improving public health. In that time, our economy grew 164

percent, population grew 39 percent, and our energy consumption increased 42

percent, yet air pol ution from the six major pol utants decreased by 48 percent. In
2002, state data reported to EPA showed that approximately 251 mil ion people (or
94 percent of the total population) were served by community water systems that met al health-
based standards. This number is up from 79 percent in 1993.

JAPAN AND EUROPE

The Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nobutaka Machimu ra, provided remarks in
October 2005. A European Union statement was issued in 2 006. Both statements
were addressed to international meetings on the environme nt.

MACHIMURA Nobutaka, Minister for Foreign Af airs of Japan
On the occasion of the Fourth Informal Meeting on Further Actions against Climate Change

Climate change is a serious and long-
term chal enge that has the potential to affect
every part of the globe, and human activities are contributin g to the increases in
greenhouse gases. We al know that concrete and urgent act ions are required to
arrest the rise of greenhouse gas emissions around the worl d. In February this year,
the Kyoto Protocol entered into force. This means al Annex I ratifiers of the
Protocol are now bound by the international law to meet thei r quantified
greenhouse gas emissions reduction under the Protocol. For our part, the
Government of Japan formulated the Kyoto Protocol Target A chievement Plan in
April in order to firmly achieve its reduction target of 6%. Th e Plan pursues the
balance between the environment and economic growth ma inly through promoting
technological innovations, improving energy efficiency, and col aboration by al

stakeholders. Japan is strongly committed to meet its reduct ion goal.

From http://mofa.go.jp/policy/environment/warm/cop/messa ge0510.html.

The Kyoto Protocol is an important step to tackle the issue of climate change, but
it is just a first step. We know further efforts have to be mad e for the long-term
mitigation of greenhouse gases, in order to meet the ultimat e objective, namely, the
stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations at a safer lev el. To achieve this goal,
we must construct an encouraging and enabling framework, instead of a punitive
one, so that both developing and developed countries wil pl ay active roles in
intensive efforts to reduce greenhouse gases beyond the firs t commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol.

European Union

The World Meteorological Organization recently issued a rep ort indicating that
concentrations of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas es in the atmosphere are
at their highest levels ever. There are many concrete signs t hat this is already having
consequences for climate and nature. The Artic ice is meltin g at an alarming rate.

Last September, the ice cap had retreated a record 250 km north of Alaska. If this
continues, there may be no ice at al during the summer of 2060. In this morning’s

edition of Le Soir, we can read of the Greenland ice disappearing much faster than
expected. With glaciers moving 2500 metres per year instead of 300 there is a real
possibility that the impact of climate change wil be far worse than even our more radical models.

The economic impacts are also vast. The Association of British Insurers estimates
that, by 2080, insured losses from hurricanes in the US alone could reach US$ 100–

150 bil ion a year. And the changing climate wil radical y modify the basis for
many of our core economic activities, such as agriculture, energy production and transport.

The scientific debate about the human causes of climate change is largely settled.

Yet there remains an important gap between climate science and the global policy
response. We cannot afford such gap. I believe there is now a window of opportunity
to mobilize the world's key leaders in favour of an al iance against climate change.

There is a high level of consensus on the need to act. Views stil diverge on the
adequate policy and approach, but few stil doubt the need for a global response to

adequate policy and approach, but few stil doubt the need for a global response to climate change.

The EU is ready to engage in an open and constructive dialogue with al partners

and major emitting countries. We must seize this opportunit y and together provide a
forward looking strategy for the future climate cooperation p ost-2012.

The EU wil deliver on its climate policy and target of an 8% reduction in
emissions of greenhouse gases. By 2004, the EU had cut its emission by 1%. With the
additional measures planned in the second phase of the Eur opean Climate Change
Programme, we should meet our 8% target, and maybe eve n overshoot it. This
should be compared to significant emission increases in ma ny parts of the world, including the US.

With a share of only 14% in global greenhouse gas emission s, the EU cannot
resolve the problem on its own. But we are determined to de monstrate that pro-
active climate policies give results, and that they do not end anger economic growth.

…

Meeting the climate chal enge requires efforts to reduce glo bal emission by the
widest possible group of industrialized countries and major developing nations. We of course expect the United States—
as the world’s main emitter of greenhouse gases
with levels wel above 1990—
to take strong and resolute action on climate change,
and I believe there are encouraging signs on the other side of the Atlantic.

GREENPEACE

The fol owing announcement was provided to the internatio nal press in November 2005.

• • •

Time Is Running Out!

Greenpeace today unveiled a four metres tal hourglass outs ide the UN Climate
Change Conference in Montreal to remind the arriving deleg ates that time is running out. The climate summit—
the first since the Kyoto Protocol entered into force—

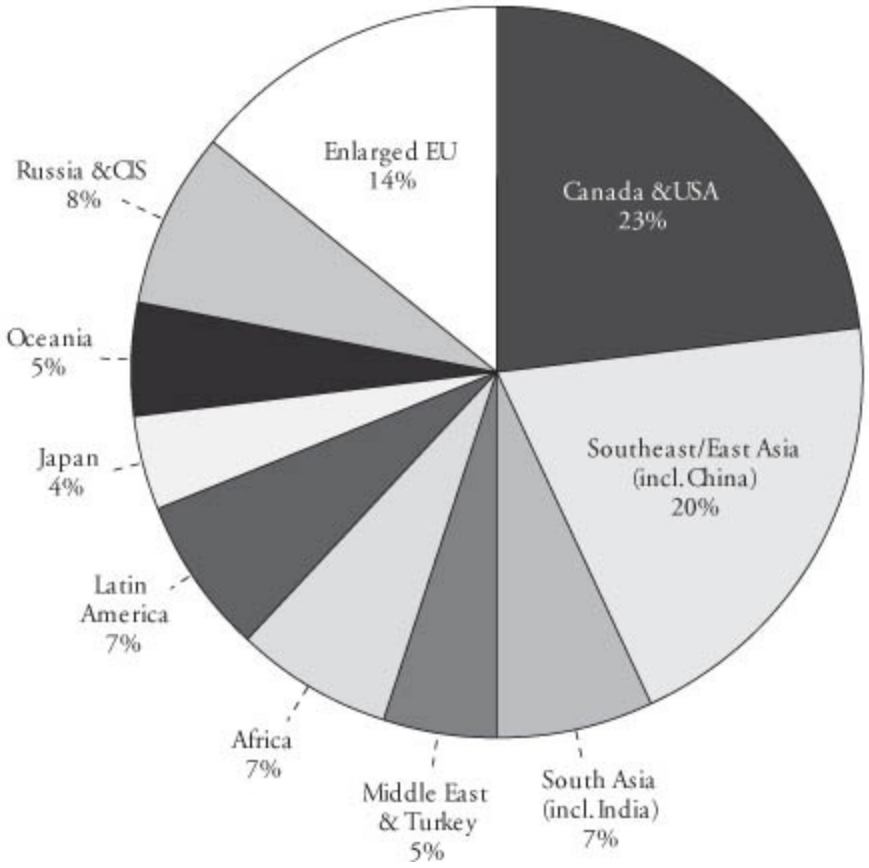
opens today, beginning two weeks of crucial negotiations on climate protection.

“Time is running out for the climate. Climate change is not a distant problem to
be dealt with sometime in the future. In fact we have very lit tle time left to avoid
the most catastrophic impacts. Without prompt, decisive act ion from governments
here we wil soon find ourselves riding a runaway train and i t wil be impossible to
apply the brakes,” said Stephanie Tunmore, Greenpeace Inte rnational Climate
Campaigner in Montreal. If climate change goes unchecked many of its effects wil
be irreversible. Glaciers in western China are expected to ha ve largely disappeared
by 2100; summer sea ice in the Arctic could be lost wel bef ore the end of the
century according to some models, leaving polar bears, ice- dependent seals, walruses and certain sea-

birds facing extinction; and over the next several decades th ere is a
risk that regional climate changes combined with the effects of forest clearing could
flip the ecosystems of the Amazon from forest to grassland or desert.

Greenpeace believes that the goal of climate policy should b e to keep global
average temperature rise to below 2°C above preindustrial l evels, a position also
adopted by the European Union Heads of Government. It is s til economical y and
scientifical y possible to do this with known technological m eans. The decisions
made in Montreal wil determine whether or not those optio ns remain viable.

From http://www.greenpeace.org/international/press/release s/time-is-running-out.



Greenpeace also believes that by strengthening and expanding the Kyoto Protocol for the next phase (2013–2017) a strong signal wil be sent that wil increase confidence in the carbon market and encourage business to invest in low carbon technology. The process for this should begin here in Montreal and be completed by 2008.

“The 156 Governments who have ratified the Kyoto Protocol now have the obligation to show that they mean it. They must get on with negotiating the next phase of Kyoto, with much stronger emission reduction targets for industrialised countries. We hold this planet in trust for our children and our children’s children.

Are we real y prepared to look them in the eye and say ‘Sorr y, we just ran out of time’?” concluded Tunmore.

Greenpeace is an independent, campaigning organisation, w hich uses nonviolent,
creative confrontation to expose global environmental probl ems, and to force
solutions essential to a green and peaceful future.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA AND OPINION SURVEYS

The fol owing tables, derived from United Nations data, sho w regional issues in the
area of environmental pol ution, and should be juxtaposed w ith policies and
opinions stemming from different regions as wel .

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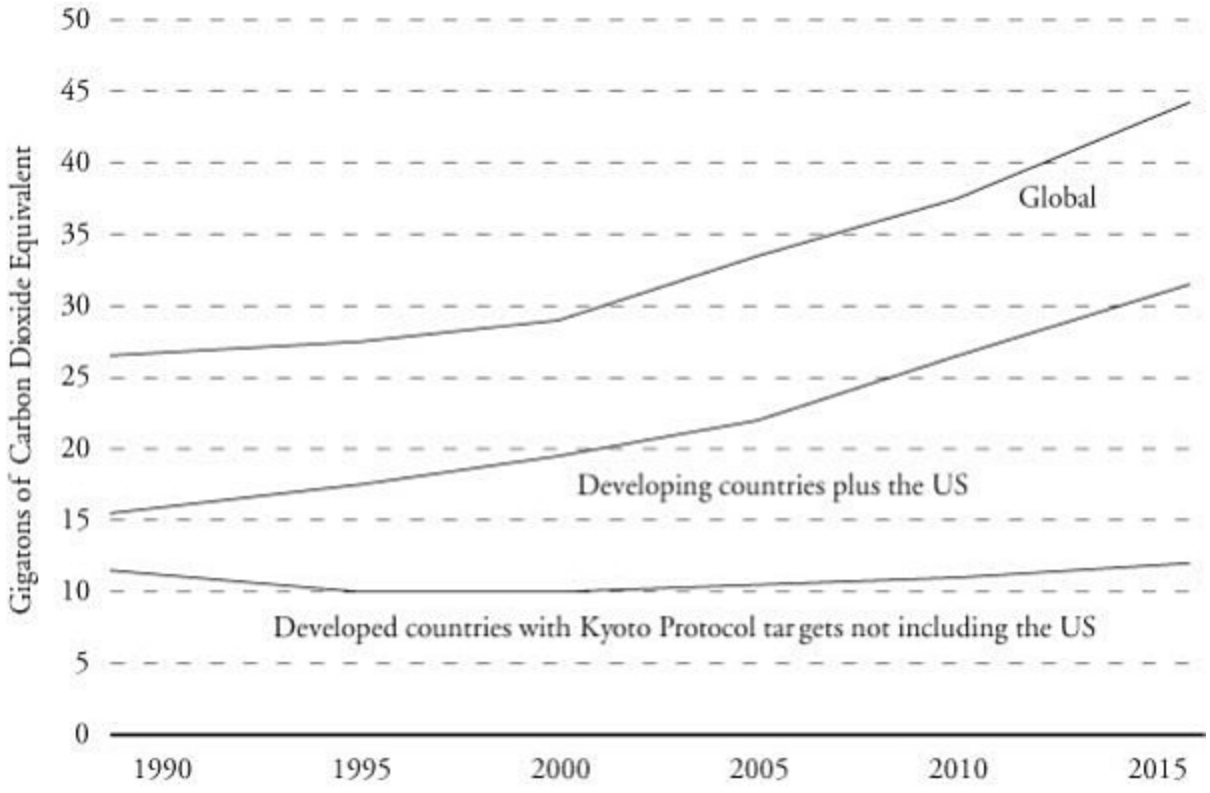
TABLE 36.1 GLOBAL EMISSIONS IN 2000

TABLE 36.2 GLOBAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION PROJECTI ONS*


Gigatons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
50
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
1990
1995
2000
2005
2010
2015
Global
Developing countries plus the US
Developed countries with Kyoto Protocol targets not including the US

	A Great Deal %	*A Fair Amount* %	*Only a Little/Not At All* %	*DK* %
United States	19	34	47	1
Great Britain	26	41	32	1
Spain	51	34	14	2
France	46	41	14	0
Germany	30	34	36	1
Russia	34	31	34	-
Indonesia	28	48	23	1
Egypt	24	51	23	1
Jordan	26	40	34	-
Turkey	41	29	23	8
Pakistan	31	25	39	5
Nigeria	45	33	20	2
Japan	66	27	7	0
India	65	20	13	2
China	20	41	37	2

Based on those who have heard about the "environmental problem of global warming."

	The Bird Flu Diseases	*Global Warming*
United States	92	91
Germany	100	95
France	100	97
Britain	97	100
Spain	99	93
Russia	98	80
Jordan	98	48
Egypt	96	47
Turkey	97	75
Indonesia	99	35
Pakistan	82	12
Nigeria	82	42
Japan	99	99
China	93	78
India	99	57

Percent who *have* heard of each news item.
Adapted from a United Nations survey, summer 2006.

*Projections are based on a business-as-usual scenario.

TABLE 36.3 GLOBAL WARMING CONCERNS

TABLE 36.4 INTERNATIONAL NEWS STORIES PEOPLE HAVE—AND HAVE NOT—HEARD ABOUT

ABOUT THE EDITOR

PETER N. STEARNS is Provost and Professor of History at George Mason University. He introduced a world history course in the mid-1980s, and has taught it every semester since. He has written a number of texts and essays in world history, and has contributed to world history projects for the College Board a

nd other agencies. He is
an active member of the World History Association.

He is also past Vice President of the American Historical Ass ociation and its
Teaching Division. A social historian by training, he has writt en over fifty books on
topics in U.S. and European social history as wel as world hi story. At Carnegie
Mel on, he has won the university’s major teaching prize an d has been active in
various aspects of curriculum planning. He is also increasing ly interested in
approaches to training students in the skil s of historical ana lysis, including
comparison, and has participated in a number of innovative exercises and assessments.